

THE BETTER WAY

AN ADVOCATE OF SPIRITUALISM AS A SCIENCE, PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.

VOLUME 8.

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CONTENTS.

FIRST PAGE—The Signs of the Times, by Dr. Willis; The Credulity of Incredulity, or the Incredulity of Credulity, by Hon. A. R. Richmond.
SECOND PAGE—Is Nature Governed by Intelligence, by Silas Tyrell; Utopianism, by W. A. Mellon; Spiritualism, by Calvin Brown; Through the Crucible; The Psychic Research Society.
THIRD PAGE—Spiritual Phenomena, by Will C. Dodge; A Seance in Sacramento, An Interesting Seance, Brooklyn, N. Y.; Testimonial for P. N. Foster, Adv.
FOURTH PAGE—Editorials:—Is Christianity in the Hands of the "Surfers"? Who are the Criminals? It Must Be Told; School Hygiene; Minor Editorials; Personal and Local; News Items.
FIFTH PAGE—Society Correspondence; Advertisements.
SIXTH PAGE—Ladies' Department: A Violet Blossom, Poem, by M. Theresa Allen; Meddism, by Mrs. Lois Washbrook; Questions, Poem, by Calla Harcourt; Meetings, Adv.
SEVENTH PAGE—Timely Topics; What is Spiritualism? by F. Skinner; Literary; Advertisements.
EIGHTH PAGE—The Credulity of Incredulity, or the Incredulity of Credulity, concluded; Psychic Research Society; Opening of the New York Society of Ethical Spiritualists; Pungent Paragraphs; Movements of Mediums; Adv.

Original Essays.

Written for The Better Way.

THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

DR. F. L. R. WILLIS.

The signs of the times are many and significant, especially in the direction of religious thought.

It cannot but be evident, even to casual observers, that during the past quarter of a century there have been many and very great modifications of opinion upon matters of belief as regards religious truth.

Our evangelical sects are being compelled to revise their creeds, modify their doctrinal beliefs or lose their hold upon the living present. One point after another—"Total Depravity," "Endless Misery," "A Hell of Physical Torments," "Vicarious Atonement," "Justification by Faith," "The Infallibility of the Bible"—has been so weakened, so undermined by the progressive tendencies of the age, as to have lost to a very great degree its hold upon modern thought.

In all our centres of civilization, theological doctrines have lost their power and influence to a great extent. The Westminster Catechism, although still clung to nominally by the sects, is almost a dead letter in their pulpits. We listen in vain for the old-fashioned doctrinal sermons of our childhood. We have to go into the backwoods to hear them. Intelligent, thoughtful persons—persons of literary culture or scientific research—and especially persons spiritually unfolded to any extent, will not listen to them, and so the modern evangelical pulpit has been compelled to keep pace with the marvelously progressive spirit of the age, and relegate its credal statements of belief to the sphere of fossils, ancient ruins, dusty old manuscripts, the mummied treasures of old Egypt. All valuable, all cherished with care upon the shelves and in the cabinets of our museums as relics of by-gone ages and peoples, but sustaining little or no vital relation to the living present.

The marked indifference to creeds in the churches themselves, and the ethical character of most of the so-called evangelical preaching of the day, are certainly among the most significant signs of the times.

In most unexpected quarters we find men breaking away from the limitations of credal belief, and uttering sentiments that either nullify their influence or if carried to their logical issue, positively refute them.

Take as illustrative of this point some recent utterances of Rev. Dr. Hill, President of the Rochester University, a Baptist institution in the city of Rochester, N. Y. They were addressed to the Sunday school teachers of the First Baptist Church of that city. The subject up for discussion was the inspiration of the Bible. Read these statements of the Rev. gentleman, with the credal dogma in mind of the Infallibility of the Bible and its plenary or verbal inspiration.

"All the requirements of Christian faith are satisfied by accepting the persons of the Bible as media through whom it has pleased God to reveal religious truth, and the Bible itself as the written record of that which cannot accept the verbal inspiration of the Bible they cannot accept its inspiration at all. I do not believe we must accept the verbal inspiration of the Bible or that we must have a theory of inspiration. When a bright scholar asks you about your theory of inspiration you had better tell him you haven't one, unless your theory is very clearly defined. Ask yourself if the Bible requires you to have any theory of how it was inspired, or if the Bible presents any theory of inspiration. I think you will answer both questions in the negative. Hence we perceive the futility of that procedure which builds up a creed or a system on a mere collection of proof-texts, gathered without reference to their context, and having force only upon the assumption that the Bible is a divine oracle rather than a collection of literature."

"The Bible affords us a revelation of religious truth given to and through persons. We are in danger in these days of falling into bibliology—a worship of the Bible as an idol. We must not forget that for a long time there was no Bible. We are told that there was no Bible until the time of Ezra, after the Babylonian captivity. We must accustom ourselves to thinking of a people with a religion but without a Bible. The revelations were received by persons, passed on by persons, and received by us through persons. The personal revelation is primary and the written revelation is secondary. If every Bible were destroyed we should still have Christianity."

Equally significant as a sign of the times is the recent trial of Rev. Mr. McQueary, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, before a Ecclesiastical Court in the diocese of Ohio, for heresy. The Rev. gentleman in a book of his entitled "The Evolution of Man and Christianity," says:

"All the earlier narratives of our Lord's life and teachings fail to furnish us even approximately satisfactory proof of the virgin birth, but the evidence deduced seems to favor the view that Joseph was the father of Jesus. The story of the virgin born as it stands in the Gospel is so improbable and the evidence supporting it so uncertain that criticism cannot accept it. It was much better for the cause of religion to frankly acknowledge the meagerness and weakness of the evidence admissible in support of the traditional view, and to offer an explanation which, while it robs the birth of the supernatural drapery, yet retains the great fact that an avatar of God was born of Mary and Joseph. The earliest tradition concerning Christ's resurrection simply teach that it was a spiritual appearance. He simply showed Himself in spirit to His Apostles. This was not a subjective hallucination of theirs, but a real objective manifestation of the spirit of Jesus from the unseen sphere. Around this kernel gradually grew the husky narratives of the Gospel, whose authorship is so uncertain, whose conceptions are so materialistic, so inconsistent with the conception of the unseen sphere which scientific theology forces upon us, that we must set them aside as valueless. A popular question is: What became of the body of Jesus if it was not raised from the grave? This question is based upon the details of the grave, etc., given in the Gospels, but since they are unreliable from late additions, the question has no force. The body doubtless crumbled into dust somewhere, and the disciples who saw Jesus alive in the spirit would care little for the body."

No wonder the Rev. gentleman was tried for heresy, when the above quotations directly assail three of the most sacred, even if the most absurd dogmas of credal faith, namely, "The Virgin Birth," "The Infallibility of the Bible," and "The Resurrection of the Body," all of which are affirmed in the ritual of the Episcopal Church, reiterated every Sunday by all who take part in the service, and assented to by a formal and reverential bowing of the head.

Equally significant of the great change that is going on in the world of religious thought is a sermon preached by Rev. Myron Adams, pastor of the Plymouth Congregational Church in Rochester, upon the above trial. He selected as his text Hebrews viii: 13. "In that he said a new covenant, He hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old waxeth aged, is nigh unto vanishing away."

No text could by any possibility be more apposite to the present position in the world, of Credal Faith. It has most assuredly waxed aged, and "is nigh unto vanishing away."

But read the bold, brave words of this preacher, still occupying an evangelical pulpit, who believes in the philosophy of evolution, and cannot escape from, or be

false to, the convictions forced upon him by a mightier teacher, a more authoritative revealer than Bible, ritual or creed. Even the science that weighs the heavens, and measures the stars.

"Until recently the advocates of the Christian religion had no doubt that God made man by just telling the dust of a certain place to get itself into the shape of a man, and that then God breathed into the nostrils of this image, and it became a man. And then, by way of proof, it was said that God can surely do anything. He is omnipotent, and if he wishes to make a man in that way there is nothing to hinder."

"We are beginning to feel, in an indefinite way, that there is much to hinder. The only mode in which we can know how God makes things, is to see how things are actually made. Trees grow, that is the way they are made. The buffalo, the elk, the horse grow. That is the way that God makes them. And we have found out too that species grow. That is the way species are made."

Read the following arraignment of the church. No bolder, braver words are uttered from our own rostrum.

"The church has run to outwardness. It has on the whole cultivated the disposition to attach one's self to outward things. They who have ruled the church have proposed to our faith that which real faith cannot have anything to do with. They have proposed a Christ in the flesh. They have been solicitous concerning the body of the Christ, which was but organized matter. They have assured their followers that the body of Jesus was in some sense a divine body. They have said that after it was crucified it rose from death, that it ascended to the right hand of God. They have insisted that such things happened to a physical body. And they have commanded men to believe in flesh and blood. Now for faith to develop upon such things, or for a human spirit to grow strong upon such food is as impossible as for a physical body to grow strong by feeding upon the wind. If these things did happen, every one of them, they are as though they did not happen, so far as faith or our inward life is concerned."

At a recent meeting of the Evangelical clergy of Atlanta, Ga., they pronounced condemnation upon the action of two clergymen of that city, who had been recently engaged in a heated public debate upon the beautiful, consoling doctrine of "Infant Damnation." Think of it! In the full light of the marvelous progress of the nineteenth century. With great questions springing up on every hand, concerning most vitally the interests of mankind in the living present; with crying evils all about us that demand the earnest attention of all good ministers, and all good men, could anything be more painfully absurd than to see two men, occupying the position of public teachers of morals and religion, wasting, worse than wasting, their time and their energies in a bitter discussion of a damnable dogma that the masses of Christendom have unanimously, and joyfully consented to let drop out of sight.

And yet this dogma, with its kindred one of—"No Salvation for the Heathen out of Christ,"—lives still in the creed, and is a stench in the nostrils of all Christians—and thanks be to the angel-world the number is daily increasing who attach far less importance to creeds and dogmas than to character.

This agitation within the church, these trials for heresy that are constantly occurring, these discussions upon the revision of creeds, the restatement of doctrines, the restlessness and dissatisfaction so apparent throughout Christendom, are all glorious signs that the despotic reign of doctrinal belief, of dogmatic authority is approaching its end.

And to what is this largely due? Most unquestionably to the power and influence of that mighty movement known as Modern Spiritualism. A movement that has made a mark upon public opinion unprecedented in the history of the world; a movement that in the short period of less than half a century has reached a position of power as regards numbers and influence, that it took over three hundred years for Christianity to attain. We challenge the scoffer or sceptic to point to any land on the face of the broad earth where the languages of civilization are spoken where Spiritualism has not made its power and influence felt.

For forty-three years its power and influences have been pouring into our atmosphere in one broad stream of energizing, vivifying, spiritualizing power from the great army of the immortals

who had been impatiently waiting the time when the progressed conditions of our earth should admit of a freer, closer communion.

When at last that period arrived, one of the first announcements made from the upper spheres was: "We have come to emancipate the children of earth from their servile bondage to credal beliefs." From that day to this the power of dogmatic authority has waned, and all the signs of the times betoken its entire decay.

Spiritualism declared at the very start the worthlessness of doctrines and dogmas, and the immense importance of moral character, thus taking issue at once with the church with its assertion of "Justification by Faith" alone. By this declaration it arrayed in antagonism with itself the entire body of the clergy, who have been fighting it ever since. But it has gone on triumphantly, conquering and to conquer, despite the bitter antagonism of church and state, of pulpit, press and bar, modifying and changing public opinion in all directions. Adopting the liberal views of the Unitarians and Universalists and Free Thinkers, it reaches beyond all these to the source of life, to the vital power of all religion, and all unrecognized by the religious world, it is stirring society to its very depths, and with a rapidity we little dream of, is infusing a more vital life into church and state, and into the social world as well. The events of today, the true Spiritualist believes to be under the guidance of powers above those of the earth, and hence he knows Spiritualism to have a most vital relation to the times.

For forty-three years the conditions of the earth have permitted a freer and fuller inflow of spiritual life than the world has ever before known. Inspirations of wisdom from on high have visited all classes of men. They have been freely scattered even among those who recognize not the truths or the power of such influences.

Wherever these noiseless visitors from the beautiful homes of the hereafter have found a brain they could impress, a heart they could touch, a soul they could inspire, they have not paused to ask of credal belief or of intellectual attainment, but quietly and peacefully they have roused the activity of the human mind, until their inspirations of wisdom have permeated the mental atmosphere of the earth, even as the gentle dews of heaven saturate its physical atmosphere. Its power has been felt within the limits of the Church most sensibly, and vital life is beginning to flow even therefrom. Within the precincts of state, too, has this power been felt, and legislative assemblies have been impelled by its inspiration to higher legislative wisdom.

Men who have recognized this power are deemed Spiritualists. Were we to call all who receive it by that name, we should number the inhabitants of the globe, for no nation, or people, or tribe, is without this spiritual influence from on high.

The signs of the times are indeed most cheering. The days are prophetic. They are full of promise. They are the morning of the coming day. Through the influence of the angelic sphere, now so closely allied with this, the earth is emerging into a higher and nobler life, and men are moved upon by the power of the spirit world, whether they will or no. The moments are rich as they fly past, laden with the growing thought of the people, and whether the world recognizes or not, the blessed truths, the redemptive power of true Spiritualism, we can rest assured of this—that it has come to stay, and that its mission is to bring the day of glad awakening, when the blind shall see, the deaf hear, and the earth recognize as its only savior the Spirit of Truth.

The Dripping Water Test.

The statement that a man could not endure to receive in the palm of his hand a quart of water falling drop by drop from a height of three feet was given a practical test yesterday by the employers of a carriage factory. The foreman of the trimming department volunteered to prove that the thing could be done and succeeded in the attempt. His hand was fixed immovably and the water started. The test occupied two or three hours, but the man endured no remarkable discomfort. Burlington Hawkeye.

Written for The Better Way.

THE CREDULITY OF INCRECULITY, OR THE INCRECULITY OF CREDULITY.

HON. A. R. RICHMOND.

"We blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."—Matt. xxiii. 24.

What a wonderful mental phenomenon is the credulity of incredulity. How many there are who in their religious beliefs listen with confidence to the whispers of faith and follow with eagerness the phantom hope, yet who in investigating the theory of immortality, doubt the evidence of their senses and disbelieve the testimony of known credible witnesses.

Worcester, the lexicographer, defines credulity to be "the easiness of belief, readiness to believe without sufficient evidence." And the learned Archbishop Whately says that "the only way to avoid credulity and incredulity—the two necessarily easily going together—is to listen to and yield to the best evidence and to believe or disbelieve on good grounds." Credulity forms its opinions and beliefs on evidence; so does incredulity. Then why should not the same rules or requisites apply to the one that does to the other? If credulity believes the ancient stories of the happening of wonderful occult phenomena in times past, why should it be incredulous as to the occurrence of similar events to-day.

No thinking mind doubts the immutability of the creative power or unchangeableness of nature's laws. Yet while credulity admits this axiomatic proposition to be true, it is incredulous as to the logic of its statements. For credulity believes in a spirit life, but is incredulous as to whether that fact can be proven. Credulity asserts the fact of a spirit world, and in consequence of its credulity believes the statement but denies that its existence can be proven. Credulity is assured of a continuity of life beyond the grave, yet it disbelieves the evidence that demonstrates it. The philosophy of orthodoxy is made up of credulity and incredulity combined; like Janus the divinity of Roman mythology, it has two faces which are in turn presented to votaries, and its logic is as follows:

"All facts are susceptible of proof.

Immortality is a fact.

But it cannot be proven."

Both credulity and incredulity assert the truth of the major and minor propositions of the syllogism, and with equal vehemence declare the absurd conclusion. Both believe in the existence of a creator, a "Father light, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Both also believe the occult phenomena recorded in so-called sacred history, in the spirit visitations and ministrations of ancient times, and yet deny the possibility of like occurrences to-day.

Let us remember that hope and faith are no stronger testimony of the happening of one uncertain event than another. "They are but the evidence of things not seen," a staff of reeds that so often broken has pierced many a hand. Even the conviction they bring to the human mind is based upon the evidence of facts proven by the experience of men. There can be no faith in a future event without some evidence that it will occur; no hope that it will happen without the same amount of testimony upon which faith forms its convictions. Orthodox theologians talk of belief as if it was a voluntary action of the mind; when it is as involuntary as the motion of the heart or lungs. We are no more responsible for the action of our reasoning faculties than we are for the unconscious movements of our physical organism. And yet the credulity of creeds believes in the justice of the awful pronouncements of St. Mark:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he who believeth not shall be damned."

Here credulity makes an involuntary action of the mind a *sine qua non*, to the reward of salvation. Therefore the logic of the statement is this: If by accident we hear testimony that compels us to believe *volens volens* we deserve and will receive everlasting life in heaven therefor. While if—through no fault of our own—we do not hear this testimony and therefore cannot believe, the doom of the damned is our punishment. Could credulity possibly be more absurd in its philosophy, more illogical in its deduc-

tions, or more cruel and unmerciful in its interpretation of the divine law, by which a loving Father judges his children and rewards or punishes them?

The parental care and affection of the supreme intelligence—whom we call God—for all the beings he has created, is so manifest in the life, love and landscape of earth that to doubt it is the very sublimation of incredulity. And yet credulity believes all the horrors of the theory of endless punishment to be an emanation from the divine mind; an epitome of all the kindness and justice with which a "Father of light" governs his children. Credulity believes in a revengeful God "Who is quick to anger, and whose wrath ensueth forever," while incredulity doubts the enduring love and denies the future happiness of the human race. Credulity believes that there was once a war in heaven among immortal spirits, that the first sin—treason was committed there. That man was created to supply the place of the angels who were banished from Elysium for their crimes; that afterwards man fell through the combined temptation of the devil and a woman, and subsequently a plan of redemption was invented by the divine mind; a vicarious sacrifice prepared; a murder on the cross atoned for the sin of eating an apple, and that by and through this incomprehensible scheme of salvation a small portion of the human race will be finally saved, while uncounted billions will be damned. Credulity believes all this, yet is so incredulous as to ignore the light of advancing thought and enlightened reason, clings to the mythical romance of ignorance and superstition, and prides itself on its skepticism of modern investigation and phenomena, while it cherishes with unshaken faith the credulity of ages long past. Credulity in the jury box believes the testimony of respectable truthful witnesses as to what they have seen and heard in the daily walks and business transactions of life, no matter how unusual they may appear, yet it is very incredulous when the same witnesses testify to the evidence of their senses in describing what they have seen on the border land of occult phenomena. Credulity is often very positive in its assertions while incredulity is even more positive in its declarations, and arrogant in its denials. The one is sometimes considered an evidence of mental weakness, while the other is often mistaken for shrewdness or wisdom. Credulity is much more honest in its observations and narrations than is its opposite, for it cannot believe without some evidence, while stupid, illogical, unreasoning incredulity can deny without investigation, and disbelieve because it would not see or hear the evidence. It requires but little mental power to deny what others have seen, while intellect is absolutely necessary to correct observation and logical deductions.

The mysterious phenomena of so-called spirit manifestations have been investigated by the most profound savants of earth, and have defied the learning of science to explain them by any known law. The most absurd theories have been adopted to account for each separate phenomenon by itself. Pseudo-scientists have exhausted the ingenuity of invention and the absurdity of illogical reasoning to solve the mysteries. Credulity and incredulity those—"Blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel"—have lent their willing aid in the research; yet was it but the "blind leading the blind" with the result predicted by St. Matthew in all investigations where ignorance and bigotry assume the duties that can only be impartially performed by intelligent truth and candor.

It is a well established axiom among scientists that where new phenomena are manifested, evidently arising from one common cause, any satisfactory explanation thereof must be consistent with all the manifestations, and explain all of them in accordance with a law that governs them as a whole. It will not do to adopt a theory that will explain one or two phenomenal occurrences, and leave others of like character unexplained. The explanation must be consistent with all, or it is evidently defective. Now, we have a number of phases of so-called spiritual phenomena—clairvoyance, clair-

Concluded on Page 8.

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false to, the convictions forced upon him by a mightier teacher, a more authoritative revealer than Bible, ritual or creed. Even the science that weighs the heavens, and measures the stars.

"Until recently the advocates of the Christian religion had no doubt that God made man by just telling the dust of a certain place to get itself into the shape of a man, and that then God breathed into the nostrils of this image, and it became a man. And then, by way of proof, it was said that God can surely do anything. He is omnipotent, and if he wishes to make a man in that way there is nothing to hinder."

"We are beginning to feel, in an indefinite way, that there is much to hinder. The only mode in which we can know how God makes things, is to see how things are actually made. Trees grow, that is the way they are made. The buffalo, the elk, the horse grow. That is the way that God makes them. And we have found out too that species grow. That is the way species are made."

Read the following arraignment of the church. No bolder, braver words are uttered from our own rostrum.

"The church has run to outwardness. It has on the whole cultivated the disposition to attach one's self to outward things. They who have ruled the church have proposed to our faith that which real faith cannot have anything to do with. They have proposed a Christ in the flesh. They have been solicitous concerning the body of the Christ, which was but organized matter. They have assured their followers that the body of Jesus was in some sense a divine body. They have said that after it was crucified it rose from death, that it ascended to the right hand of God. They have insisted that such things happened to a physical body. And they have commanded men to believe in flesh and blood. Now for faith to develop upon such things, or for a human spirit to grow strong upon such food is as impossible as for a physical body to grow strong by feeding upon the wind. If these things did happen, every one of them, they are as though they did not happen, so far as faith or our inward life is concerned."

At a recent meeting of the Evangelical clergy of Atlanta, Ga., they pronounced condemnation upon the action of two clergymen of that city, who had been recently engaged in a heated public debate upon the beautiful, consoling doctrine of "Infant Damnation." Think of it! In the full light of the marvelous progress of the nineteenth century. With great questions springing up on every hand, concerning most vitally the interests of mankind in the living present; with crying evils all about us that demand the earnest attention of all good ministers, and all good men, could anything be more painfully absurd than to see two men, occupying the position of public teachers of moral and religion, wasting, worse than wasting, their time and their energies in a bitter discussion of a damnable dogma that the masses of Christendom have unanimously, and joyfully consented to let drop out of sight.

And yet this dogma, with its kindred one of—"No Salvation for the Heathen out of Christ,"—lives still in the creed, and is a stench in the nostrils of all Christians—and thanks be to the angel-world the number is daily increasing who attach far less importance to creeds and dogmas than to character.

This agitation within the church, these trials for heresy that are constantly occurring, these discussions upon the revision of creeds, the restatement of doctrines, the restlessness and dissatisfaction so apparent throughout Christendom, are all glorious signs that the despotic reign of doctrinal belief, of dogmatic authority is approaching its end.

And to what is this largely due? Most unquestionably to the power and influence of that mighty movement known as Modern Spiritualism. A movement that has made a mark upon public opinion unprecedented in the history of the world; a movement that in the short period of less than half a century has reached a position of power as regards numbers and influence, that it took over three hundred years for Christianity to attain. We challenge the scoffers and sceptic to point to any land on the face of the broad earth where the languages of civilization are spoken where Spiritualism has not made its power and influence felt.

For forty-three years its power and influence have been pouring into our atmosphere in one broad stream of energizing, vivifying, spiritualizing power from the great army of the immortals

who had been impatiently waiting the time when the progressed conditions of our earth should admit of a freer, closer communion.

When at last that period arrived, one of the first announcements made from the upper spheres was: "We have come to emancipate the children of earth from their servile bondage to creedal beliefs." From that day to this the power of dogmatic authority has waned, and all the signs of the times betoken its entire decay.

Spiritualism declared at the very start the worthlessness of doctrines and dogmas, and the immense importance of moral character, thus taking issue at once with the church with its assertion of "Justification by Faith" alone. By this declaration it arrayed in antagonism with itself the entire body of the clergy, who have been fighting it ever since. But it has gone on triumphantly, conquering and to conquer, despite the bitter antagonism of church and state, of pulpit, press and bar, modifying and changing public opinion in all directions. Adopting the liberal views of the Unitarians and Universalists and Free Thinkers, it reaches beyond all these to the source of life, to the vital power of all religion, and all unrecognized by the religious world, it is stirring society to its very depths, and with a rapidity we little dream of, is infusing a more vital life into church and state, and into the social world as well. The events of today, the true Spiritualist believes to be under the guidance of powers above those of the earth, and hence he knows Spiritualism to have a most vital relation to the times.

For forty-three years the conditions of the earth have permitted a freer and fuller inflow of spiritual life than the world has ever before known. Inspirations of wisdom from on high have visited all classes of men. They have been freely scattered even among those who recognize not the truths or the power of such influences.

Wherever these noiseless visitors from the beautiful homes of the hereafter have found a brain they could impress, a heart they could touch, a soul they could inspire, they have not paused to ask of creedal belief or of intellectual attainment, but quietly and peacefully they have roused the activity of the human mind, until their inspirations of wisdom have permeated the mental atmosphere of the earth, even as the gentle dews of heaven saturate its physical atmosphere. Its power has been felt within the limits of the Church most sensibly, and vital life is beginning to flow even therefrom. Within the precincts of state, too, has this power been felt, and legislative assemblies have been impelled by its inspiration to higher legislative wisdom.

Men who have recognized this power are deemed Spiritualists. Were we to call all who receive it by that name, we should number the inhabitants of the globe, for no nation, or people, or tribe, is without this spiritual influence from on high.

The signs of the times are indeed most cheering. The days are prophetic. They are full of promise. They are the morning of the coming day. Through the influence of the angelic sphere, now so closely allied with this, the earth is emerging into a higher and nobler life, and men are moved upon by the power of the spirit world, whether they will or no. The moments are rich as they fly past, laden with the growing thought of the people, and whether the world recognizes or not, the blessed truths, the redemptive power of true Spiritualism, we can rest assured of this—that it has come to stay, and that its mission is to bring the day of glad awakening, when the blind shall see, the deaf hear, and the earth recognize as its only savior the Spirit of Truth.

The Dripping Water Test.

The statement that a man could not endure to receive in the palm of his hand a quart of water falling drop by drop from a height of three feet was given a practical test yesterday by the employers of a carriage factory. The foreman of the trimming department volunteered to prove that the thing could be done and succeeded in the attempt. His hand was fixed immovably and the water started. The test occupied two or three hours, but the man endured no remarkable discomfort. Burlington Hawkeye.

Written for The Better Way.

THE CREDULITY OF INCREDULITY, OR THE INCREDULITY OF CREDULITY.

HON. A. B. RICHMOND.

"Ye blind guides which strain at a gnat and swallow a camel."—Mat. xxiii. 24.

What a wonderful mental phenomenon is the credulity of incredulity. How many there are who in their religious beliefs listen with confidence to the whispers of faith and follow with eagerness the phantom hope, yet who in investigating the theory of immortality, doubt the evidence of their senses and disbelieve the testimony of known credible witnesses.

Worcester, the lexicographer, defines credulity to be "the easiness of belief, readiness to believe without sufficient evidence." And the learned Archbishop Whately says that "the only way to avoid credulity and incredulity—the two necessarily easily going together—is to listen to and yield to the best evidence and to believe or disbelieve on good grounds." Credulity forms its opinions and beliefs on evidence; so does incredulity. Then why should not the same rules or requisites apply to the one that does to the other? If credulity believes the ancient stories of the happening of wonderful occult phenomena in times past, why should it be incredulous as to the occurrence of similar events to-day?

No thinking mind doubts the immutability of the creative power or unchangeableness of nature's laws. Yet while credulity admits this axiomatic proposition to be true, it is incredulous as to the logic of its statements. For credulity believes in a spirit life, but is incredulous as to whether that fact can be proven. Credulity asserts the fact of a spirit world somewhere in space, but is incredulous believes the statement but denies that its existence can be proven. Credulity is assured of a continuity of life beyond the grave, yet it disbelieves the evidence that demonstrates it. The philosophy of orthodoxy is made up of credulity and incredulity combined; like Janus the divinity of Roman mythology, it has two faces which are in turn presented to votaries, and its logic is as follows:

"All facts are susceptible of proof.

Immortality is a fact.

But it cannot be proven."

Both credulity and incredulity assert the truth of the major and minor propositions of the syllogism, and with equal vehemence declare the absurd conclusion. Both believe in the existence of a creator, a "Father light, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." Both also believe the occult phenomena recorded in so-called sacred history, in the spirit visitations and ministrations of ancient times, and yet deny the possibility of like occurrences to-day.

Let us remember that hope and faith are no stronger testimony of the happening of one uncertain event than another. "They are but the evidence of things not seen," a staff of reeds that so often broken has pierced many a hand. Even the conviction they bring to the human mind is based upon the evidence of facts proven by the experience of men. There can be no faith in a future event without some evidence that it will occur; no hope that it will happen without the same amount of testimony upon which faith forms its convictions. Orthodox theologians talk of belief as if it was a voluntary action of the mind; when it is as involuntary as the motion of the heart or lungs. We are no more responsible for the action of our reasoning faculties than we are for the unconscious movements of our physical organism. And yet the credulity of creeds believes in the justice of the awful pronouncement of St. Mark:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he who believeth not shall be damned."

Here credulity makes an involuntary action of the mind a *sine qua non*, to the reward of salvation. Therefore the logic of the statement is this: If by accident we hear testimony that compels us to believe *volens volens* we deserve and will receive everlasting life in heaven therefore. While if—through no fault of our own—we do not hear this testimony and therefore cannot believe, the doom of the damned is our punishment. Could credulity possibly be more absurd in its philosophy, more illogical in its deduc-

tions, or more cruel and unmerciful in its interpretation of the divine law, by which a loving Father judges his children and rewards or punishes them?

The parental care and affection of the supreme intelligence—whom we call God—for all the beings he has created, is so manifest in the life, love and landscape of earth that to doubt it is the very sublimation of incredulity. And yet credulity believes all the horrors of the theory of endless punishment to be an emanation from the divine mind; an epitome of all the kindness and justice with which a "Father of light" governs his children. Credulity believes in a revengeful God "Who is quick to anger, and whose wrath ensueth forever," while incredulity doubts the enduring love and denies the future happiness of the human race. Credulity believes that there was once a war in heaven among immortal spirits, that the first sin—treason was committed there. That man was created to supply the place of the angels who were banished from Elysium for their crimes; that afterwards man fell through the combined temptation of the devil and a woman, and subsequently a plan of redemption was invented by the divine mind; a vicarious sacrifice prepared; a murder on the cross atoned for the sin of eating an apple, and that by and through this incomprehensible scheme of salvation a small portion of the human race will be finally saved, while uncounted billions will be damned. Credulity believes all this, yet is so incredulous as to ignore the light of advancing thought and enlightened reason, clings to the mythical romance of ignorance and superstition, and prides itself on its skepticism of modern investigation and phenomena, while it cherishes with unswerving faith the ancient traditions of ages long past. Credulity in the jury box believes the testimony of respectable truthful witnesses as to what they have seen and heard in the daily walks and business transactions of life, no matter how unusual they may appear, yet it is very incredulous when the same witnesses testify to the evidence of their senses in describing what they have seen on the border land of occult phenomena. Credulity is often very positive in its assertions while incredulity is even more positive in its declarations, and arrogant in its denials. The one is sometimes considered an evidence of mental weakness, while the other is often mistaken for shrewdness or wisdom. Credulity is much more honest in its observations and narrations than is its opposite, for it cannot believe without some evidence, while stupid, illogical, unreasoning incredulity can deny without investigation, and disbelieve because it would not see or hear the evidence. It requires but little mental power to deny what others have seen, while intellect is absolutely necessary to correct observation and logical deductions.

The mysterious phenomena of so-called spirit manifestations have been investigated by the most profound savants of earth, and have defied the learning of science to explain them by any known law. The most absurd theories have been adopted to account for each separate phenomenon by itself. Pseudo-scientists have exhausted the ingenuity of invention and the absurdity of illogical reasoning to solve the mysteries. Credulity and incredulity those—"Blind guides, which strain at a gnat and swallowed a camel"—have lent their willing aid in the research; yet was it but the "blind leading the blind" with the result predicted by St. Matthew in all investigations where ignorance and bigotry assume the duties that can only be impartially performed by intelligent truth and candor.

It is a well established axiom among scientists that where new phenomena are manifested, evidently arising from one common cause, any satisfactory explanation thereof must be consistent with all the manifestations, and explain all of them in accordance with a law that governs them as a whole. It will not do to adopt a theory that will explain one or two phenomenal occurrences, and leave others of like character unexplained. The explanation must be consistent with all, or it is evidently defective. Now, we have a number of phases of so-called spiritual phenomena—clairvoyance, clair-

Concluded on Page 8.

Written for The Better Way.

IS NATURE GOVERNED BY INTELLIGENCE? DOES GOD EXIST?

SHAN TAYLOR, No. 2.

"Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty into perfection?"—Bible.

Prof. Thomas Huxley, thinking, no doubt, that he could throw a greater light upon the subject, presents us with a new name for the "specific force" of Stewart, which he calls "Protoplasm or Physical Basis of Life," and this new theory, he affirms, explains all about the real origin of life. He informs us that "Protoplasm is composed of carbon, nitrogen, hydrogen and oxygen; and that they are compounded by plants into the matter of life, which is the first compound or element possessing inherent motion. That the action of protoplasm in the common nettle is the same as in the drops of blood, and hence, that both plants and animals have their origin in a particle of nucleated protoplasm, and that, strange as it may seem, it dies with the form it produces and is resolved into its lifeless constituents again."

Such is Prof. Huxley's hypothesis of the origin of life. But if it is true, will the professor or anyone else tell us how it is possible for one structural unit of protoplasm to produce a plant, another a horse, and still another a man? If the chemical constituents of protoplasm are always the same, and its action is the same in the vegetable as in man, why it should produce such diametrically opposite results? As it is a well attested fact that water naturally runs down hill, who will ever expect to see it running up hill, unless it is known that there is a power back of it forcing it up? And what better reason does the professor give for his statement than that water should be expected to run up hill? If his theory is the correct one, why should the acorn always produce the oak tree, why should another particle possessed of precisely the same parts produce anything but an oak tree? Or why should the various animals invariably produce representatives of the one that furnished the germ? Why should "the matter of life" in the rose always develop a rose, and not some other plant or flower or man? If it is not the nature of protoplasm to work uniformly, who can tell what freaks it may or may not cut up?

Since, then, the professor has simply given us the constituent parts of protoplasm, but has not told us how or in what way it is possible for it to work so diversely, and to produce such varied phenomena, to what conclusion does his protoplasmic theory force us? Why we are forced to conclude that, up to the present hour, scientific research has utterly failed to detect the life-giving and that, while scientific men have been moved by it to point out the channels and the instrumentalities through which it circulates and works, they have not been able to even apprehend the power that has moved themselves to action. Conclusive evidence, then, to my mind, that the life principle which holds the several parts of protoplasm together, causing each part to perform its function in unison with the others to produce its specific result, is the precise thing that escapes from all forms when they die; and that it is so pure and refined that Prof. Huxley cannot catch it in his crucible or perceive it with his microscope to tell us what it is.

The one fundamental error of Materialism may be found in the proposition declaring matter to be the only substance; for it is from this alone the deduction is possible that the mind of man is dependent upon a gross material brain for its existence. But if spiritual Christianity is perhaps somewhat responsible for this materialistic absurdity, for it predicates all of its teachings upon a personal, immaterial God. Of course the Materialist heartily endorses this part of the Christian's creed, and calls spirit immaterial, which is simply another name for nothing, and so swings off to the opposite extreme, declaring that matter is the only substance. The Christian teaches that God created matter out of nothing, and made man out of its dust. The Materialist that God is a myth—that matter always existed, and out of its cold, dark and unintelligent loins evolved intelligent man. The Materialist laughs at the stupidity of the Christian for believing that God created matter out of nothing, but is too blind to see where the laugh comes in against himself for believing that unintelligent matter created mind out of nothing. Thus does the Materialist while rejecting one absurdity swallow if possible a still greater one.

Such has been the outcome of attempting to establish a theory, a philosophy, a science, upon spirit or matter alone. We have only to see the wretched mess made by both parties, in the application of their different methods, to see the fallacy of both their theories. There must be a oneness, a bringing together of spirit and matter, a union of cause with the effect which it produces, in order to have a true philosophy and a sound science.

And yet there are those claiming to be Spiritualists, who endorse the Christian theory of causation; and also others who adopt the theory of Materialism. Some of the former ignore matter as a substance entirely, while the latter relegate all the workings of nature to matter alone. The first simply give us a soul without a

body; the latter a body without a soul. Evidently, then, we can never arrive at the truth by either of the old modes of reasoning. If we would rightly understand nature, we must see her as she is—must see her intelligent and possessed of an infinite will in all her operations.

But Dr. Whittemore tell us that "the laws of nature are variable and imperfect." And Brother Pentecost agrees with him, for he says: "Insanity and Infinite Intelligence are irreconcilable, unless the Infinite Intelligence is infernal." Of course, I can respect their opinion, but I cannot subscribe to it. A child who knows nothing of mechanics may stand and look at a complicated set of machinery and see the various wheels revolving in different directions, but he cannot for his life see and understand how all of the opposite motions tend to the same end—to produce one specific result. No more do our esteemed brothers, in looking at nature, seem to comprehend what they call her antagonistic phenomena. They cannot see that they are designed for the individualization of man, and his harmonious unfolding, spiritually, into divine and beautiful proportions. Yet, evidently, this is the one grand result to accomplish which they are all directed.

Hence, what little philosophy or science I have or know anything about is based upon the fact that the universe is composed of mind, spirit and matter. That spirit is the imponderable substance of the universe, and mind the energizing force which, by its action upon spirit, produces matter. With this as a starting point, it is easy to see that, organically, every form of matter is dual, and that the inherent life force of each form must control and govern it in obedience to the law of its individual being. It seems to me that this principle is the bed-rock of truth upon which the student of nature should plant firmly his feet, if he would be truly informed concerning what are usually called her secrets. It will help him somewhat to understand the principle of the formation of worlds and realize something of the wisdom, and power by which they are upheld, controlled, governed. It will cause him to see that the "specific force" of Stewart, "The Conservation of Energy or Force" of Mill, and the "Protoplasm or Physical Basis of Life," of Huxley, are resolved at last into the magnetic currents of the Infinite Mind, which circulate through every vein, artery and capillary of the Universe, and that the Infinite will produces all the forms, facts or phenomena which he beholds in nature, which so greatly puzzle our Materialistic scientists. He will see that the embryo of all existences—the germ in matter—is spiritual and therefore deathless. He will see that the stock in the armation of certain savans that all of the life germs were destroyed during the fiery period of our planet, because he is aware that they were the life and soul of things and were necessarily in the fire and flame, working to prepare the earthly elements for the ascension of intelligence into the exalted form of man. And though countless ages were to roll by, and it was to exist in an almost infinite variety of forms before the final goal—the human form—was reached, yet he is as well satisfied that the result was as certain to come, as that mind, spirit and matter are coeval and co eternal.

Of course, this view of the subject will be rejected by the Christian, because he believes in a God who exists outside of infinite matter; and by the Materialist because he cannot discern spirit with the bodily senses, yet they will both agree in calling spirit immaterial. But I deny their assumption. Spirit is material in that it contains and expresses matter, but it is not what the Materialist calls matter, because he recognizes as substance nothing but the outer shell or sheathing of the true substance, which is spirit; and spirit is so pure and subtle that it forever escapes all the mechanical contrivances which the ingenuity of man can invent.

But Dr. Whittemore, in his argument against the Infinite Intelligence, seems to endorse the idea of a limited intelligence, as held by John Stuart Mill, who is trying to run universal nature. He says:

"We may pause here to remark that the writer has been denounced as an Atheist for advocating the possibility of some governing or superintending intelligence less than infinite, who is managing universal mind and matter as best he can."

I fail to see the propriety of calling the doctor an Atheist so long as he believes that even limited intelligence is trying to govern the universe. And I also fail to see just how he can harmonize his limited belief with the teachings of Spiritualism. The three points of his argument are: 1. "There is no Infinite Intelligence to govern nature in infinite wisdom." 2. "The laws of nature are variable, imperfect, and, in many instances, work evil instead of good to man." 3. "There is an intelligence less than infinite, who is managing universal mind and matter as best he can."

Now, if these point which he makes are true, we are forced to the conclusion that there are two positive and antagonistic principles existing in the universe, and each is striving for the supremacy. This destroys the universal law of progress taught by Spiritualism, and gives us two partial laws in its stead, which may

be called progression and retrogression. Hence, nature is only chaos and confusion. Nor can the doctor be even certain that his life in the spirit world will not be a thousandfold more disagreeable and unharmonious than it is on the earthly plane of existence. Wonder if he finds no difficulty in believing that an intelligence less than infinite, would be weak and egotistical enough to presume that he could run universal nature. If the law of retrogression should happen to snuff out the limited intelligence, what would become of the universe? Such an argument might do well enough to oppose Materialism to accept, provided we were forced to accept either it or that, but we are not; for we have a theory of causation which is addressed to the reason of man. I mean Integralism. The Integralist takes nature as he finds it, wisely believing that it takes the whole universe to correctly interpret the universe and finding the three elements, mind, spirit and matter in the universe, he rationally concludes that they constitute the Infinite Cause of all objective phenomena; and hence, is both Spiritualist and a Materialist. He believes that mind expresses matter from spirit, causing it to take certain forms for specific purposes, and that, when the purposes intended are accomplished, they are disintegrated by the same intelligent will and reformed into other and higher forms of beauty and use. Hence, the most Dr. Whittemore has written about a "personal God," who created all things—"of a Supreme First Cause," or of an "Uncaused Cause," is without a particle of significance to the Integralist, because he believes in no such God, not even in a Supreme First Cause, in the sense that there was ever a time when the worlds and their intelligent inhabitants did not exist. Therefore it cannot be truthfully said that God or Nature ever created or evolved the first man and woman, except in the first formation of the human species or newly evolved planets. Hence, he believes that there is a first cause of forms, but not of the substance of which they are composed; for he regards all substance as being eternal.

And although Bro. Pentecost is opposed to calling the universe God, and says: "But I insist that an Infinite Eternal Energy, or the universe is not God, and that it is an arbitrary misuse of the word God, and a pandering to superstition, to apply it to any of these things," I am nevertheless compelled to insist that it is the only sensible and reasonable explanation ever given of the universe and of the origin of man. And if it is not the proper standpoint from which to study Nature, where is the sense in calling man a microcosm? It is universally conceded, I believe, that man is an epitome of the universe—is a living, self-conscious, moving world in miniature—and that all the properties and qualities of the universe are represented in his make up. But if the universe is not intelligent, why should man be called an epitome of it, when he is more than the universe? In analyzing man, we find something more than bones, muscles, sinews, hair, skin, brains and blood—something that feels, thinks, reasons, weighs, decides, and that forecasts the future—and with this something added to the other parts, we see man, standing forth in the image of the Infinite Intelligence who produces him!

Thus does the universe, when properly interrogated, answer the two questions which stands at the head of our article in the affirmative—Nature is governed by Intelligence; God does exist.

Written for The Better Way.

UTOPIANISM.

W. A. MELLOAN.

It is a privilege and perhaps a duty to criticize whatever is not in harmony with our knowledge and experience. We are not to put our candle under a bushel even if it is but a tallow dip. I take it, this privilege may be exercised also regarding the opinions and sentiments of messengers from the spirit land as well as those yet in the flesh. To some, it may seem presumptuous to question the wisdom of the spirits, but I have sometimes profited by disregarding their advice, and have come to the conclusion that to err is as human, or nearly so, to those out of the body as to those in the body. This frame of mind leads me often to dissent from views presented on the lecture platform, whether purporting to come from the spirit control of the medium, or from the medium personally.

For instance, I think too much Utopianism is indulged in on the lecture platform; too much fancy displayed in depicting what ought to be and what can be made the condition of things on earth. Mrs. Lake's lecture in a recent issue of THE BETTER WAY is rather amenable to this objection; it assumes to be prophetic as well as descriptive, and the description as to what may be is, I think, overdrawn. She represents her model commonwealth as coming within twenty-five years or so when "brotherhood" will take the place of "patriotism," and every one will share in the good things of this world proportionately to his needs. This is rather too premature and extravagant, but when qualified by another sentence in the lecture, it may be brought nearer to the sphere of reason. That sentence represents those gathered around the table of good things as entitled to help themselves, each one to what he has earned. This is

better, as vastly more reasonable. When each one helps himself to what he has earned, justice will be done; but God help the idlers, the vicious and good-for-nothings generally who have earned nothing. I greatly fear their yearnings for an "equal division of other men's earnings" will mar the beauty of this model picture of a millennial commonwealth to be introduced, or its coming hastened by a "convulsion of psychic force." Now it would take a convulsion of psychic force to produce such a commonwealth; but I doubt whether psychic force makes permanent progress in that way, but rather according to the Greek proverb "It hastens slowly." Social order, as now existing, has been of slow growth in coming to what it is, and this applies not only to enlighten, but to savage races. Social conditions cannot be changed suddenly. Our poor Indians in their sad experience since the white man came among them, affords evidence that man cannot change his nature suddenly, and if a convulsion of psychic force should turn society up-side-down in the United States within the next twenty-five years, as predicted, it would most certainly result as Mrs. Lake has portrayed, in another part of the same lecture the same elements which rule now to make society what it is would reassert themselves, and the old commonwealth would re-appear, only in a new dress.

Poetic fancy, whether in the body or out of the body can produce delightful pictures of model commonwealths, inspirationally. Plato set the example in that line two thousand years ago, and in our times, Moore, Fourier and Cabot, and numerous others have tried their hand at it; not only at drawing the picture but in endeavors to produce the original in the concrete. We have had our Phylanthrasys, Icarias, and other models of social organism in abundance, but they have all failed. Why? Because they have to deal with man as he is, and not as the poet or spirit control would have him to be. Psychic force has organized and constructed man on a different plan from that of Utopia; has placed him in a condition where he has to struggle earnestly and vigorously for existence, and accordingly to appearances, such a struggle is necessary for the development of his physical and psychological nature. According to this plan, many must fall by the way, so that only the fittest may survive and the race be improved, until the idlers, vicious and good-for-nothings generally are weeded out.

But I would not have these remarks taken in disparagement of Mrs. Lake's lecture. It contains many worthy and beautiful sentiments, as do many other lectures which the spiritual platform presents. I would only say that we must not depend too much on pictures which are best calculated to grace the halls of mansions in the skies.

Written for The Better Way.

SPIRITUALISM—WHAT IS IT?

CALVIN BROWN.

The first month of a new year seems an appropriate occasion for the expression of my thanks for the satisfaction I have experienced as a subscriber to THE BETTER WAY in its excellent management as an exponent of the interests involved in Modern Spiritualism in its various departments of phenomena, philosophy and the practical application of its teachings to the requirements of the time. Although in thus expressing myself in regard to my experience of the past as one of its readers, my fervent wishes for the future prosperity of THE BETTER WAY are implied, I can but emphasize these wishes in consideration of the urgent need of just such a journal for the presentation of all the phases and bearings of Spiritualism in the same liberal and unprejudiced spirit that heretofore has especially characterized its columns.

As a Spiritualist of more than thirty-five years' experience in the observation of the phenomena of Spiritualism and the study of their implications, which has profoundly impressed me with indelible convictions of their bearing upon and application to the present exigencies of the people on this earth in respect to their fraternal relations and in opposition to the prevailing system of social classification, sectarianism and industrial competition which exists among them. I have been especially gratified to observe that THE BETTER WAY, in addition to its recognition of the importance of teaching the truth of Spiritualism by the record of its wondrous revelation, has also advanced to a clear perception of their significance in relation to all the affairs of mankind.

It seems to me that the time has come when the hitherto restricted, but, nevertheless, important service of doctrinal propaganda, should broaden out into more communal interest and effort, and that Spiritualists should more generally set themselves at work by the dissemination of their principles to direct the now seething reformatory impulsion, both in religious and secular affairs, which everywhere among the nations are bubbling up from the depths of society. I am glad, therefore, to see the standard taken by THE BETTER WAY in reference to the social manifestations of the time, for I believe that among the multifarious exhibitions of discontent and the heterogeneous doctrines and schemes proposed for their remedy, there is in-

peratively needed a unifying principle for their coalescence in practical adaptation, which can be found only in the implications of Spiritualism. Thus, to me, there seems not only a special significance in the title of your journal, as expressive of a well timed departure from the routine followed by some of our publications, but a prophetic intimation of the practical part Spiritualism is destined to take in the universal improvement of man's condition by its presenting ideas which never before our age were reckoned applicable to his earthly interest. Thus the inspiration that prompted the title of THE BETTER WAY would appear as an instance of that universal impulse which is now stirring the minds of reflective people in the hope of an improved condition of humanity, but who may be waiting for the development of the principle that may effect it. As an illustration of the widely extended operation of this impulse, I may be allowed to quote the following remarkable and eloquent closing passage of Lange's "History of Materialism," a German publication of quite recent date, and translated into English:

"Often already has an epoch of materialism been but the stillness before the storm which was to burst forth from unknown gulfs, and to give a new shape to the world. We lay aside the pen of criticism at a moment when the social question stirs all Europe, a question on whose wide domain all the revolutionary elements of science, of religion, and of politics, seem to have found the battle fields for a great and decisive contest. Whether this battle remains a bloodless conflict of minds, or whether, like an earthquake, it throws down the ruins of a past epoch with thunder into the dust and buries millions beneath the wreck, certain it is the new epoch will not conquer unless it be under the banner of a great idea, which sweeps away egoism and sets human perfection in human fellowship as a new aim in the place of restless toil, which looks only to the personal gain."

The prophetic import of the last seven lines, and the spirit of the sentiment, I feel certain will find a sympathetic echo, both in the managers of THE BETTER WAY and its readers, encouraging them with the assurance that their hopes and efforts in behalf of humanity are thus shared by one of the subtlest thinkers of the age. Had he not ignored the facts of Spiritualism, if indeed they had ever been presented to him, he would have found in its philosophy that same "great idea" of which his profound work is unconsciously prophetic.

Written for The Better Way.

THROUGH THE CRUCIBLE.

BY J. WHITTEMORE, M. D.

CHAPTER XX.

(Concluded.)

Marian pursued her own department of benevolence independently in her own chosen methods. They were mutually happy in each other, and each independent in the good work they were doing. But all these things were the smaller auxiliaries to his main design. His purpose was to expend his money, as far as it would go, to form co-operative companies in all departments of manual labor and various manufacturing interests, so that the laborers should own and control the capital they created, and should reap the full reward of their labors. For this purpose he sought to instruct laborers as fast as possible how to do business. And when it became necessary, he loaned money, or donated it, as the case demanded, to individuals and companies to further this end. He often loaned buildings and machinery, or sold them to such associations at a mere nominal price. In many similar ways he was restoring again that which had been robbed. But in such a way that each would share according to his ability and industry.

In carrying out these purposes, he was voluntarily every year diminishing his personal income by tens of thousands, and proposed to continue this good work until he found himself in possession of only a fair compensation for the hard and responsible work he was performing.

Mr. La Rue became alarmed at the novel proceedings of William and Marian. He said to his son-in-law:

"Benevolence is well enough, and if not carried to extremes, is sensible. I think better of it than I used to. Julian had no heart at all, but you go to the opposite extreme and will give away all your living. Now, my son, that's not sensible."

With this feeling, fearing that they might come to want, he made his will, giving only one-third of his property to Marian, and two-thirds to her children at their majority.

Mr. La Rue was old before his time, and was becoming feeble, both physically and mentally. But he clung closely to his love of wealth, and his personal charities were lamentably small. But in some directions he had made progress. He had broken loose from Papacy, and had no affiliation with priestcraft anywhere. He had become a firm believer in and an advocate of spirit communion. And that a republican form of government for Americans was sensible.

We would not have the reader deceived about this Grant family. It is true, they lived in a splendid mansion, and had numerous servants, rode in

splendid carriages, and maintained a place among the elite of society. They attended many fashionable parties, and gave some themselves. But they gave more seats for the poor than for the rich, and enjoyed them better. They also expended more money upon them.

Mr. Grant's method of business made him comparatively little known among the "bells" and "bears" of Wall street. But he was known and loved by thousands of laborers, and, notwithstanding his modesty and quiet manner of doing business, he could not avoid some notoriety as a friend of the poor and an outspoken advocate of the laboring classes, and a determined opponent of rings, trusts and government-protected monopolies, and every other method of robbing labor, and gambling with the people's money. He was also known as an opponent of all priestcraft and religious domineering. So there was no stint in orthodox ranks of curses of the stingy, old infidel. Still he kept steadily to his glorious work.

When two more years of active, benevolent work had passed, a beautiful boy baby was added to augment what was before almost perfect bliss. This boy was named Fred Harvey. Mary said playfully:

"I want to name my boy for the only man I ever loved."

She was never quite pleased to drop the name out of existence.

Five years later we find this model family holding on their way gloriously, in the full tide of prosperity, usefulness and mutual happiness. Some changes had come to them. Mr. and Mrs. Princeton, within a few days of each other, joyfully passed to a higher life in a good old age. They had been gone a year. And only a few years since Louis La Rue had very suddenly passed to spirit life.

The two beautiful children—Ella just past seven, and Fred Harvey a few days more than five years old—were both bright, beautiful children. Maggie Reed was on the day of our call visiting her old home, and had in her arms a little charming girl, just learning to walk. Vida Falsom Sharp was living happily with her lawyer husband, whom we hope is an honest man, as we know him to be a smart one.

Her younger sister, Etta, had been duly installed in Vida's place. Albert had just passed his second year in college, and was boarding at home. Mr. Falsom held his place as confidential clerk, and was in hearty sympathy with Mr. Grant in his works of benevolence. Anne Neisen was still a member of the family, hale and vigorous at fifty as most women at thirty-five.

Taken together, this family was as nearly a scene of domestic felicity as this world can produce.

[End.]

THE PHYSIC RESEARCH SOCIETY

To the Editor of The Better Way.

During the absence of our earnest worker, Mrs. Adah Sheehan, through whose instrumentality and organism we receive so much light from the higher sphere of life, and who is filling an engagement for the present month at Indianapolis, our rostrum was occupied by Mrs. Mary Barnitz, on Sunday, the first inst., by special request, it being her first appearance before a public audience. The subject was "Religion and Social Reform," and while the writer differed from her views to some extent, a great many of her points were well taken and she gave some excellent and wholesome advice in well chosen language. The following are a few of the topics dwelt upon by the speaker, viz: The triune evil of the natural man; Sensuality, avarice and position. Advised closing one's self and laying bare the conscience before God, then behold what a barbarous animal man really is. A sensual thought was as guilty as though the act had been committed.

Our marriage relations were all wrong as well as the begetting of offspring in our present imperfect condition, advising celibacy until the race had become regenerated.

The speaker advocated woman's rights and thought Spiritualism had done more for the advancement of their cause than any other class, as they were the first to come boldly before the public in their demands for woman's equality. In fact, she thought Spiritualism true but its methods sadly at fault, claiming that it sought to purify from without, inwardly while theosophy probed directly to the roots and proceeded from the "within."

The use of flesh for food was strongly discouraged and the time would come when no animal life would be sacrificed for the sustenance of the human race.

Society, in her opinion, demands a radical change and while we agree with her as to a change, we do not expect to accomplish it all at once, but are of the opinion that as man has attained his present position, whatever that may be, by gradual evolution in accordance with the laws of heredity or nature, just so must the change be accomplished by gradually educating out of error.

C. E. ALLEN.

A patent has been taken out in France for an electric furnace for the rapid incineration of human remains.

Cresosoted wood has been found to have such excellent lasting qualities that its economical properties have suggested its use for permanent haulage, roads, shaftways, etc., in collieries.

Written for The Better Way.

SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA.

WILL C. HODGE.

One of the finest and most satisfactory seances that I have ever attended was held on the evening of August 1st. The medium on this occasion is not in the field as a public worker, therefore the name will not be given. On the afternoon previous to the seance, myself and wife, were out for a walk, and passing one of the many neat cottages to be found at Onset Bay we were hailed by a man sitting on the porch with, say, you people! there is a man here who gives me the name of Sylvester and who says he is going with you. We had never even seen the medium before but did know very well who Sylvester was, and as it was the first thing we had received upon the grounds from any of our friends, we stopped awhile to chat with the medium, and securing tickets for the evening seance went our way. When the time for the seance arrived we found present nineteen persons. The seance opened with an exhibition of slate writing that was remarkable. Two clean slates were placed together and laid upon the top of a small table when the medium requested some one to come forward and place their hands upon the slates, which was responded to by Capt. Austin and wife, of Syracuse N. Y., my wife and self. Piling our hands upon the slates, the writing immediately commenced, when the medium requested us to take our seats. Handing the slates to my wife he requested her to take them to some party in the room and place them upon their shoulder and to be governed by her impressions in making the selection. This she did, the writing constantly going on while the slates were in her hands. The slates were then taken by the medium and laid upon the shoulder of every person in the room and all declared they could distinctly hear the sound of writing. When the circuit of the room was accomplished, the slates were opened and thirteen distinct communications appeared, every one of which was to the point and fully recognized. Among these was a message from Sylvester, the party who caused us to be hailed while passing the cottage. Not only this, but while passing around with the slates, the medium gave many convincing tests through clairvoyance and clairaudience which were satisfactory in many instances. One of these we will relate as a sample of the whole. Turning to us he said: I hear the name of Sarah. I also hear the name of John and Henry. Sarah is on the spirit side but John and Henry are on the earth side. Sarah was nearly blind when she passed to the spirit side. She says why don't you call that man by his name? The medium then spoke our name in full. This Sarah also gave a message in relation to property matters which was all Greek to us until upon our arrival in Wisconsin it was explained by one of the sons mentioned in the message. There was a good light during these manifestations, every person and everything in the room could be plainly seen. The light was then lowered, and the seance for materialization followed.

The first form appearing was a little child who informed the manager that as conditions were very good by reason of a harmonious circle, parties might be allowed to sit with the medium. Two chairs were then placed in close proximity, my wife was asked to occupy one while the other was occupied by myself. We were allowed to hold the medium by the hands when almost instantly there arose from the floor at the side of the medium a white vapory substance which rapidly grew more dense and assumed the form of a beautiful woman not more than twenty years of age. Extending a hand to each, she exclaimed, come! and leading us into the center of the room, bade us good night, then returning to the medium she dematerialized in full view of all. We wish it distinctly understood that during this manifestation the curtain of the cabinet was drawn fully to one side leaving the medium in full view of every member of the circle. Many forms presented themselves who readily crossed the room and standing by their respective friends conversed easily and naturally and were to all intents and purposes as material as any person in the room. Two and three forms at a time was the rule, instead of the exception, while at one time there were four, each conversing with their friends.

Most wonderful manifestations were had during the evening, at one time a form materialized behind the chairs in which we were sitting. Our attention was first called to this by an illuminated place upon the carpet not larger than a man's hand which soon assumed proportion and shape of a woman who put her arms around the neck of my wife and announced her name, then turning to myself, called me by name and expressed her pleasure at meeting me. She then requested us to move our chairs and allow her to enter the circle which was done, when she conversed readily, talking among other things of her family at home, requesting us to assure them of her continued love and watchful care. After saying she would come again, she bade us good night and walking towards the cabinet had proceeded about half the distance when she fell forward and seemingly passed through the floor. This lady we had known for more than twenty

years, have often sat in circle with her in her own home and her identity was unmistakable. Not a person in the room questioned the genuineness of this manifestation, as indeed they could not well do so under the circumstances. This alone would settle the fact of materialization in the mind of any one capable of comprehending the situation. A beautiful form emerged from the cabinet clad in white robes which were illuminated with a soft white light and with a bright star upon the forehead. She approached a lady present, and kneeling down by her, announced her name, stating that she was interested in the lady's development as a medium, and was one of her spirit helpers to that end. Another fleecy cloud appearing behind the circle, all eyes were turned in that direction, when suddenly there emerged therefrom a young lady who turned to me with the exclamation, Uncle Will, I am Agnes! we are all here and are going home with you. Upon introducing her to my wife, she said: Oh yes! I know you in spirit, though I never meet you on the earth side. To say we were astonished but faintly expresses the situation. This Agnes is the oldest daughter of my only sister living in central New York and had been a denizen of the higher life for many years. What made the surprise so great was the fact that her name had not been mentioned, nor had we even thought of her in connection with our spirit friends. She conversed readily expressing her great satisfaction with the success of her undertaking. We moved our chairs as before, allowing her to enter the circle when she crossed the room and disappeared in the cabinet. Among the numerous forms presenting themselves was that of an Indian who came with all his war paints and feathers and passed entirely around the room several times, then entering the cabinet for a moment, he returned and again made the circuit of the room. He was apparently solid, and stamping upon the floor caused it to shake perceptibly. He was not communicative and was decidedly ugly in appearance, while in stature, he was large enough to have weighed at least two hundred pounds. A young man came from the cabinet and walked directly across the room approached Dr. Hare of Philadelphia and while the two were holding conversation, a young lady appeared, and coming at the side of the doctor's wife, the four parties, spirits and mortals were standing in a group talking as naturally as though neither party had cast off the mortal form.

Some of the most conclusive demonstrations of materialization that I have ever been our good fortune to witness took place at this seance, one more of which we will relate.

There was sufficient light to plainly see every person in the room. A bright light the size of a silver dollar appeared upon the carpet directly at the feet of my wife which gradually expanded with a swaying motion until it assumed the height of an ordinary sized person, when it became apparently solid, assuming the form of a lady who announced herself as Sarah, and who spoke of the boys John and Henry who still remained in the form and gave to us precisely the same message in regard to the property as given by the medium at the commencement of the seance. She talked for about five minutes and concluded by saying, Will, I have done this for you; I wish you to tell the boys when you go home that you have seen me here and give them my message. Good-by! She then gradually dematerialized, going down and disappearing at the precise spot where the light originated. It is such phenomena that makes your correspondent a believer in the fact of materialization, and would make him a Spiritualist if there were not another in the whole state of Wisconsin.

Written for The Better Way.

A SEANCE IN SACRAMENTO, CAL.

J. LORAIN.

Though I have been a confirmed Spiritualist for more than thirty-five years, still, I have attended comparatively but few seances. From much reading on the subject, I have concluded that the thoughts of spirits through other organisms are discounted, for they unavoidably partake more or less of the interior qualities of the instrument through which they are transmitted, and are shaped in accordance therewith. Amongst the numberless communications, from the spirit realm, I have doubted that any one has secured a single one of unmixed truth.

Having read much, pro and con, regarding the mediumship of Mrs. Elsie Reynolds, of San Francisco, and hearing of her holding a series of meetings in Sacramento, I went, accompanied by a married daughter and child to see and judge for myself. The facts of which I shall state, as far as I can remember.

Here meetings are held in an upper room of a private residence; the windows and doors of which are in one end, the cabinet, consisting of a curtain of black muslin drawn across from one corner to the other and contains one chair and a tin horn. I sounded within the carpetless floor, mop boards and wall, no "confederates" could enter.

About sixteen persons, in all, were present. All of whom were strangers to me; none knew my place of residence—thirty miles distant—or my name. There

was a common sized stand lamp in the room—the light turned down—but a suspended lantern, covered with blue tissue paper, afforded sufficient light to see every person in the room, the medium yet seated near, but outside of the cabinet, when the little chattering spirit who calls herself Effie, whose business seems to be that of mirth provoking, came to the door of the cabinet and in distinct childlike words—heard throughout the room—"Mr. Lorain tum here." How did she get my name? None in the house but my daughter knew it. I had my face close to hers, it was the face with the expression of innocent childhood. I took her hand, it was that of a child, and her stature was that of one of three years. During the five or six minutes thus occupied, she kept up a constant chattering to me in childish tones, but comprising knowledge beyond those years. During the evening, many spirits manifested, all of which were recognized. Their general appearance, various statures, forms and clothing, differed not from similar materializations often described in the BETTER WAY, and need not be mentioned here. Also, as they described several materialized outside of the cabinet and near the audience. After the lights were entirely excluded, they came self-illuminated.

Among others, a female darkey of Virginia type, materialized and favored us with one of their peculiar dances. Effie came out and sang. A German present asked her if she could sing in German, and gave her the words, when she sang it with the correct tune, and immediately sang it in English to the same. A lady seated at my right was motioned to by one near the cabinet, on reaching seeing distance, she exclaimed: "why! is it possible." She conversed awhile, but seemed wonderfully affected, on returning to her seat, she sobbed for some time; it was her mother whose transition occurred twelve years ago.

The daughter of General Roberts of Philadelphia, conversed fully fifteen minutes with me in choice language, and in clear tones, loud enough to be heard distinctly by every one in the room. One manifestation rather uncommon took place. In the audience was a female, who has been for some time afflicted dropsy. A spirit, self-illuminated, approached, and proceeded to manipulate her, when the fumes of medicine were distinctly sensed by every one in the room.

P. S. One materialization that escaped my memory while writing, probably would not be out of place to also insert.

My daughter's sister-in-law who has been in the spirit world for about eighteen years, and who in earth-life was very sprightly, materialized and came rapidly to her, in the manner usual in earth life; first kissed her, and stooping down kissed the child on her knee, raised up, conversed a while, said she would come again, re-kissed her, and extended both hands to me, saying "assist me back," and while on the way, and near the cabinet, she said: "Don't hold my hands so tight." On slackening my grasp she seemingly fell, and disappeared. Her impetuosity, general appearance, and motion, indicated her personal identity but she was veiled in white, which obscured her cast of countenance. One who has been absent a long time, necessarily, must be unavailing to be recognized; even by those most familiar.

AN INTERESTING SEANCE.

To the Editor of The Better Way.

I would like to describe a materializing seance held at the residence of Mrs. Graves, No. 11 Rowley street, Cleveland, O., the medium being Mrs. Effie Moss.

This was a test seance, none being present but invited guests. There were about eighteen persons present, and the manifestations were wonderful.

I had attended several previous seances, and on every occasion my mother materialized. A white cloud formed not two feet from where I was sitting, and out of this cloud outside the cabinet evolved the form of my mother. She came to where I was sitting, and took me by the hands to the lightest part of the room where I could plainly see her features, and then took me to the cabinet and entered for about a minute—as she said to gather strength,—then she would come out and converse with me on various subjects; among others, said that my wife's mother was in the cabinet trying to get strength to materialize but did not know whether she would succeed or not. She did succeed at the last seance given here, and my wife not being able to be present that evening, she stated to me that she had tried to gather strength while her daughter was present at previous seances, to materialize but had been unable until now to appear and sent by me all the love and affection that mothers are capable of.

During the seance there was an oriental spirit materialized, wearing a crown or coronet. On it were spikes or points, and on each end of said spikes appeared small lights, something like a diamond would emit in the light. She appeared on several other occasions when her apparel appeared to be one mass of brilliant. She is called Sadie, and claims to be the leader of a band of spirits called the Order of Light. On this occasion we saw on the carpet some four feet from the cabinet appear those spikes of light and gradually assume form and come higher and higher, until the full form appeared before us, and when she

was fully materialized, she commenced to give us a beautiful address in a most melodious voice, on the subject of what the spirits were trying to do for humanity in spirit life. She then began to sink gradually through the carpet or floor continuing to address us until her lips came in contact with the floor and disappeared, never having entered the cabinet at any time. The writer was called to the cabinet and held the medium by both hands outside the cabinet, six feet distant, and while so doing a spirit form appeared in the cabinet and dematerialized in full view of us all.

During this seance, Jack, the spirit manager of the cabinet, materialized. He is a large man, being six feet in height, and having a powerful voice. He opened the curtains of the cabinet and stood between them and commenced to sing one verse of a sailor song, (he having been a sailor in earth life) and while singing he commenced to sink and grow shorter and continued to sing and finish his verse just as his lips touched the floor and disappeared. A noted actress whom I had seen not many times in earth life always came to those seances and generally took the manager's arm and walked down the circle. But on this occasion she walked down the circle displaying her beautiful white garments, and six feet from the cabinet dematerialized. The writer was called to the cabinet by a lady spirit, who made in my presence a small piece of lace about two inches wide and 15 inches long, and requested me to try if I could pull it apart, I did my best, but was unsuccessful. I would like to mention one more incident. There was a spirit form that often appeared called Miss Wallace, this spirit could stand all the light that could be made in the room, and when she appeared the room was lighted to its utmost capacity. Now this spirit had blond hair and remarkably blue eyes, and when the room was so light we all could distinctly see her eyes and hair. The medium has very dark hair, quite black, and dark brown eyes. On this occasion Miss Wallace appeared in a blaze of light and in sight of us all dematerialized. During that seance there was not less than six spirits dematerialized in full view of us all, and two, my mother and Sadie materialized outside the cabinet, and Sadie never entered. During the evening not less than fifty different spirits appeared, men, women and children, and I cannot call to mind one that was not recognized.

JOHN CRITCHLEY.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

At Broadway Hall, 229 Fulton street, Mr. Hamilton Lecher opened the Conference Tuesday evening, January 13th, his subject being Truth. The speaker saying there is no religion, no philosophy, no science higher than truth.

Some persons have added the words Christian or White to their spiritualism, and thereby are liable to be cast off by the churches, and fall short of their rightful position as true Spiritualists. There is no such thing as sectarian Spiritualism, but there is a spiritual truth before which all must bow reverentially, regardless of sect or former prejudices.

Christianity is an obstruction to progress, which is the magic word that unlocks the door of truth.

The speaker concluded his remarks with a few paragraphs from one of the lectures of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, his remarks being received with favor by the audience present.

Verification.

LOUISVILLE, KY., February 4, 1891.

Mr. and Mrs. F. N. Foster, Cincinnati, O. Friends: It is with pleasure that I write you that I recognize several of the faces that appear on the photo taken by you of myself, namely, my brother, sister, and brother-in-law (a well known Cincinnati man) dead about twenty-five years, recognized also by my wife, and pronounced a good likeness by all who knew him in life; he shows also on the photo one of his characteristics to make his recognition entirely beyond question, and therefore positive.

Also Harvey Smith with whom I boarded five years; Joseph Seelmeier a college friend from Germany; and Ed. Leutsch my wife's nephew. The flash of lightning shown on the photo is symbolic of the name of my control. The face of the young lady is also perfect, and recognized by my wife, who has seen the spirit (clairvoyantly repeated). I knew this young lady when only fourteen years old, and I find a good many traces of resemblance with the face I retain in memory now twenty-four years.

I am exceedingly well pleased with the picture, and although we have discovered about fifty spirit faces on it, yet we find a new one now and then. The photo in itself is a marvel, for we discover picture within picture, and face within face. I am told by my spirit friends that, knowing I was going to Cincinnati, and that while there I would have my picture taken, they made arrangements beforehand for the forming of a tableau which when taken would have this marvelous effect. It is a perfect curio in its way, and has not surpassed a good many sketches to whom I have shown it. I would advise you to print one and study it, as it is a "puzzle picture."

Yours respectfully, J. A. MYERS.

"The first thing a Yankee does on settling in a new town is to buy a family plot in the cemetery, and the first act of a New Yorker is to arrange for a pass back to the metropolis." This is the distinction which Mr. Dewey drew between a New Englander and a New Yorker at the banquet of the New England Society in New York. It is not a bad distinction. It implies that the Yankee has more staying power.

A minister at Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., left his pulpit in disgust the other evening. Suddenly stopping in the midst of a sermon, he said: "There is flirting, talking, note writing, gum chewing and visiting going on here, and I will stop until you get through." He waited fifteen minutes, and the festivities increased instead of diminished. He then told the janitor to lock up the temple.—Why don't they preach something that is of interest to listeners, or let them send up questions for reply, and close the services by giving tests, etc. That will stop the nonsense. Like attracts like, you know.

"No, George," said the Chicago girl tenderly, "I love you, but I can't marry a poor man. There are no flies on me." "It wouldn't surprise me if there were, though," replied George. "Flies are fond of sugar." "George, I am yours."—T. poeh.

BRONCHITIS.

Is an inflammation of the bronchial tubes—the air-passages leading into the lungs. Few other complaints are so prevalent, or call for more prompt and energetic action. As neglect or delay may result seriously, effective remedies should always be at hand. Apply at once a mustard poultice to the upper part of the chest, and, for internal treatment, take frequent doses of

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral

C. O. Lepper, Druggist, Port Wayne, Ind., writes: "My little sister, four years of age, was so ill from bronchitis that we had almost given up hope of her recovery. Our family physician, a skillful man and of large experience, pronounced it unsafe to give her any more medicine, saying he had done all it was possible to do, and we must prepare for the worst. As a last resort, we determined to try Ayer's Cherry Pectoral and I can truly say, with most happy results. After taking a few doses she seemed to breathe easier, and, within a week, was out of danger. We continued giving the Pectoral until satisfied she was entirely well. This indisputable evidence of the great merit of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral has given me unbounded confidence in the preparation, and I recommend it to my customers, knowing it cannot disappoint them."

"Ayer's Cherry Pectoral cured me of a bad cough and my mother of bronchitis. I know of numerous cases in which this preparation has proved very beneficial in families of

Young Children,

so that the medicine is known among them as 'the consolider of the afflicted.'—James Rufus Vidal, San Cristobal, San Domingo.

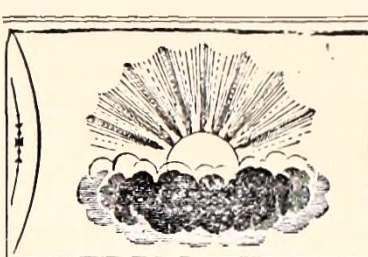
"A short time ago, I was taken with a severe attack of bronchitis. The remedies ordinarily used in such cases failed to give me relief. Almost in despair of ever finding anything to cure me, I bought a bottle of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, and was helped from the first dose. I had not finished one bottle before the disease left me, and my throat and lungs were as sound as ever."—Geo. B. Hunter, Altoona, Pa.

Ayer's Cherry Pectoral,

PREPARED BY

DR. J. C. AYER & CO., Lowell, Mass.

Sold by all Druggists. Price 25¢; six bottles, \$1.50.



VITAPATHY,

THE NEW SYSTEM OF PRACTICE,

Is the Rising Sun of this progressive age, and, like the sun, shines for all people, and heals and cheers and blesses all. VITA—Life, cures PATHY—Disease, scientifically employed through all vital means, formulated into a superior System of Practice, with its full library of books, copyrighted lessons, Chartered College, and regular sessions. Every physician should learn it to be successful. Send postage for free reading to AMERICAN HEALTH COLLEGE, FAIRMOUNT, CINCINNATI, O.

The VITAPATHIC SANITARIUM, in connection with the College, boards, nurses, and treats all manner of disease with the best success. Also diseases treated by mail. DR. J. B. CAMPBELL, Physician in Chief.

Studies in the Outlying Fields

PSYCHIC SCIENCE,

BY HUDSON TUTTLE.

This work essays to utilize and explain the vast array of facts in the field of research, which hitherto have had no apparent connection, by referring them to a common cause and from them deriving the laws and conditions of man's spiritual being. The leading subjects treated are as follows:

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A. F. MELCHERS EDITOR
CINCINNATI - - - FEBRUARY 14, 1891

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IS CHRISTIANITY IN THE HANDS OF USURPERS?

Eyraud, the stranger, has been duly and skillfully executed by the will and desire of a French court—had his head chopped off like a chicken—and all in conformity and taste with the Christian idea of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," while bloodthirsty spectators stood by awaiting the flow of human gore and when the bloody deed was accomplished cried for his head. What for? To further nurse their superstitious and revengeful natures as taught by the Christian Bible and ancient Christian doctrine, known as orthodoxy. And that they were Christians (not Spiritualists, Freethinkers and others of the progressive minded people of the world) was proven by their crossing themselves in token of their religion, thus exhibiting a reverence to their God on high—their Jesus Christ or some other holy (?) saint, who loves a token of deference sent aloft by his adulating flock below, however engaged for the time being, and even when thirsting for human gore in place of lamb's blood.

Such, however, is the law of Christian communities. Legal murder or the cold-blooded and deliberate taking of human life seems to be in as great a favor among them, as it is among the heathen, so-called—the latter though really but spiritually undeveloped people, and thus excusable for such deeds, or more so than so-called civilized Christian people are, who claim a religion based on love, charity, forgiveness, etc., as given by Jesus in his "Sermon on the Mount," but who still practice the customs of the more ancient people that lived and taught in times of the Old Testament.

Is this Christ-like or according to the teachings of the Nazarine? Did he not somewhere say that evil should not be met by evil? Does one murder then neutralize another? We do not advocate freedom for such, as it is sometimes permitted through the pardoning power of governors whereby a lot of dangerous characters to humanity are let loose as political powder for future use. No, but reform instead, and thereby teach the uneducated masses to free themselves from their revengeful desires. As the state so the people. Legal murder acts as a "suggestion" to the individual to do likewise when offended. The state is the greatest public hypnotizer extant, and should be the first to pay the penalty of breaking the ordinance relating thereto. But murder, in any form, whether committed by licensed M. D.'s, abortionists, brutal officers of the law, or the state, seems to be a Christian institution; a Christian practice; a Christian custom or law; a Christian habit and a Christian passion. It is seldom that one hears of a sentenced criminal refusing a priestly send-off or Christian ceremony previously to being treated to a Christian execution—proving that these are Christians who commit these deeds. If this be regarded as the pardoning principle in the Christian religion why not exercise it in law; in the courts; on the bench; in the legislative halls and abolish capital punishment and thereby exhibit the true Christ principle—not of brutality or that of the savage in delighting to take human life.

Let Christianity be true to itself if it persists in calling this a Christian government, and if it cannot do this, acknowledge its failure in reforming the world, the nation, the individual. There are other good men and women in the world who profess no religion or belief, but act it all the same, and prove by their actions and not their faith that they are more worthy of being called Christians than those who now have it in charge. Have these perhaps been driven out of the ranks by usurers and the corruption within, or are the outsiders the real Christians and simply have lost control of it for a time? It seems so, for it now stands in relation to the original that this government stands to the constitution as laid down by Washington, Hancock, Paine, etc. It is false to itself. It is a sham, a pretense,

a perversion of that which was, and is not the Christianity as laid down by Jesus of Nazareth, Matthew, Mark, Luke and others.

Compare that with the Christianity of to-day; the beautiful past with the ungainly present; the palm-leaf festival with the scenes on the gallows and other theaters of legal executions, and the true reformer will see that Christianity has fallen, or that so-called Christianity is not that which was born nineteen hundred years ago to save men from inhuman religious teachings of a remoter period.

"Christ is risen" is a mockery where now found; but as a principle exists in another form and another sphere, and both may be found everywhere else except within the pale of the church. It is in the free air where it cannot be fettered by creeds and dogmas; where it cannot be bought and sold as merchandise; where it cannot be belied by arrogant priests and hypocritical clergymen; where it cannot be perverted and made to subserve selfish purposes. It has found its way to another class of people who are now disseminating it properly and will as time progresses have sole charge of it. But it is known by another name. It has been born again and thus rechristened, and its name is Spiritualism!

CHRISTIAN INTOLERANCE.

The Adventist R. M. King, condemned by a Tennessee court for plowing on Sunday, and then seeing from his prison window other Christians working on that day—hauling lumber and brick—furnishes much food for philosophic reflection and cause for complaint, and suggests that we are still in the shadows of a dark and intolerant age—living in a period of time when truth is still in danger of being crushed beneath the heel of bigotry and ignorance.

Even the judges on the bench partake of this state of affairs, though a strange anomaly to apply to nineteenth century dispensers of law. But a knowledge of statutory law does not qualify one to give wise decisions in matters spiritual or that pertaining to the sciences—nor does it, in many cases, make a man rise above his only, often very narrow, religious convictions.

Too frequent displays of the latter have made this an every day topic of conversation, and from the police judge to a United States district judge and a member of the President's cabinet, can the train of religious intolerance and petty prejudices be traced and recorded to the shame of the aforementioned. They may not now see their evils, nor care if they did, but their contracted doings will be charged against them in history as they now charge the alleged crimes against their prisoners or defendants. No man who has ever persecuted his brother man for religious principles has escaped the doom of condemnation by the people—the masses, and history, from time immemorial, points with unerring finger-mark on the culprit—the tyrant—the unliberal and uncharitable religious bigot. The same spirit exists to-day in the Christian church, and we are sorry to see that even judges should so far forget their duty as to allow this spirit to control them.

Whether the Adventist is right or wrong in his belief, is of no consequence. But on the face of the whole it places Christianity in an ugly light. The facts are that the man was imprisoned for laboring on Sunday (which may be unlawful in Tennessee) but that others (Christians) were permitted to labor on the same day undisturbed, and almost as a mockery, in sight of the Adventist behind the prison bars. If the law is made to "keep the Sabbath holy," why do not Christians, for whom it is made, observe it? If they are permitted to desecrate it, an Adventist ought to have the same right. And furthermore, a man ploughing on an open field certainly disturbs no one, while lumber wagons and brick carts make the worst kind of a racket on a quiet day like Sunday. Does this not look all the world like religious intolerance—like old time persecution? Well, we have a right to infer that it is, for appearances warrant this inference.

And for aught we know, it is. Their cry against European powers for persecuting the Jew should be applied to self. They are all traitors to the constitution of this government, who make war on other religious sects. A free country means free in everything that tends to make man happy or better morally—free press, free schools and free speech. In the latter is inculcated his religious convictions, and those who persecute for opinion's sake are not progressive thinkers but narrow minded bigots who should seek a better way to heaven.

WHO ARE THE CRIMINALS?

The daily papers are constantly recording the crimes of Christians. They are many and varied. But the perpetration of crimes by Christians does not prove that Christianity makes men criminals, it only proves that it does not prevent them from being criminals.—Twentieth Century.

But yet the "good" orthodox Christian is very desirous of legislating against Spiritualism because an occasional Spiritualist imitates the Christian and his fellow constituents. There can be no counterfeiting without the genuine, and as well as there is a genuine Christianity

to judge from the many bogus Christians, there is a genuine Spiritualism—i. e., a truism which must be investigated from a rational and charitable standpoint (a spiritual point of view) and not from a bigoted or prejudiced one, or from a preconceived opinion adduced from a stupid or ignorant form of conceit with which many of the Christian would-be scientists are troubled. A little reason is required to investigate into all claims, however absurd they may appear on their face. But when relegated to the list of unworthy or inadmissible commodities of this life without deliberation, we have reasons to believe that unreason—an effect of prejudice or conceit—governs their motives.

Ignorance, too, plays an important role; but this can be overcome by a proper initiation of the subject into the mysteries (or truths) of Spiritualism. Intuition should guide every Spiritualist in this respect, and not too much light given at once. A little insight into the philosophy is never out of place, and aids in the better digestion of the phenomena when presented.

However, we hope when our neighbors have any more intention of legislating against Spiritualism because all Spiritualists do not come up to their standard of perfection, they will not forget that they have imperfect mortals in their own household as well who need attending to—notably among the clergy. And when daily papers record crimes we would admonish them not to forget to state after every criminal's name, whether he be of the Christian or Spiritualists fold. They are never derelict in mentioning the fact of a man being a Spiritualist in such cases, but somehow always forget that ninety-nine hundredths of the crimes committed are by their own clan.

IT MUST BE TOLD.

It is a very disagreeable task to be compelled to tell the truth when knowing previously that the reward will be anything but pleasant, but for the benefit of the spiritual press generally we will venture to print what others only dared to think.

What we have to say is this: A community that cites as an objection to supporting a Spiritualist paper because it does not report, whether regularly or occasionally, its local affairs, manifests a very narrow spirit indeed, and proves *prima facie* that it is not interested in Spiritualism as a cause or regards the spiritual press as a teacher of truth and morality.

Now, this does not apply in any way to places that exhibit energy enough to see to these matters themselves, but to those that do not, and of which some are hardly known to exist. Then to refuse to subscribe for reasons given is extremely ungenerous. No paper can give the local news of other communities except it is sent to them by those desiring to be heard from. But this is not the sole aim of any spiritual paper. The fundamental principle is to defend and uphold the cause, and make Spiritualism respected, besides shedding light into those little benighted regions that haven't advanced enough as yet to be able to tell the world what they are doing for the good of the cause. The best beginning that, however, can be made is to subscribe for some paper that is not afraid to tell the truth concerning themselves, for through self-knowledge only can man progress spiritually; and we hope our more sensible readers will use this argument when again met by such unliberal and unfeeling logic as herein truthfully stated.

SCHOOL HYGIENE.

Dr. Jos. E. Marcus, an eminent physician of this city, in an interview with the *Times-Star* reporter said on the hygiene of school children:

"The principal cause of troubles of brain-workers result from irregularity of living, and I say now that I find most of these troubles in pupils in school, because often they have to do work for a good many hours after they have been dismissed from school, an amount which those in charge of the school should see diminished. All except the youngest children have lessons to learn out of school hours and yet the idea of a child having to learn a lesson out of school is preposterous. A child's receptive faculties are being developed and almost all learning should be from personal instruction and this extra pouring over books is wrong."

This is another of the reforms we advocated in *Light for Thinkers* years ago, and once upon a time when one of our boys reported that his teacher had whipped him for not knowing all the lessons he had to acquire "by heart" at home, we wrote the gentleman a note saying that we did not send our children to school to be punished for their ignorance, but to be taught that which they did not know. It had the desired effect, and we regard it as a little philosophy that should be universally carried out.

With all its boasted salutary power has Christianity ever proved by positive evidence that a soul has been saved; or does it prove yet that man has a soul to save? Spiritualism does both and still it is rejected as unworthy of acceptance or even of investigation by the very ones who should hail with delight the only evidence that can save them from disintegration.

AT G. A. R. HALL.

Dr. F. L. H. Willis, the eloquent and exceedingly interesting lecturer, again presented to a Cincinnati audience on Sunday last two discourses that might be called classical—at least they would be so regarded were they published ages ago and only now given to the world for digestion. But what can survive a decade can stand the test of ages as truth ever applicable; and that which is culled from the realm of spirit through the channels of an unperverted intuition—inspiration—can ever stand. Dr. Willis' discourses are classical in that respect, for they may stand as a record of the highest attainment that the human mind is capable of in the way of comprehending the Infinite.

The subject of the first discourse was "The Relation of Spiritual Laws to Every-day Life." He interblended the scientific with the philosophical so harmoniously as to leave no room for argument open and thus satiated the mental and moral nature of the hearer in one breath, so-to-say. The evening discourse on the God-idea was metaphysical in the extreme and like the former embraced all of the higher Spiritualism as we may expect to hear it expounded altogether in the future—not only on this sphere, but in the next. It was spiritual without compromise or apology for the material or worldly, and was universally pronounced the finest production ever delivered in Cincinnati. Next Sunday morning the great systems of modern thought will be discussed, and in the evening Spiritualism will be proved the basis of all forms of religious belief.

General Booth has sued the London Times for libel on account of its attacks upon him and his "In Darkest England."

This Reverend General does not believe in Christianity's divine teachings: "But whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other one also. And if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."

No, not he. He is rather inclined to go on the war path, and instead of giving anything, will take all he can get, even to a suit that has money in it. These are practical times and Mr. Booth prefers to be a Pope to a Christ. That's right.

He who thinks low is low in spirit. Ineffectiveness, however embellished through the power of language, is to the soul what billingsgate is to the mind—the spirit of mortality—and such a spirit attracts its like here, and would find itself in just such company were it out of the body.

If you are powerless to materially aid a brother mortal in distress, send him a kind or sympathetic thought. It helps to brace him up against adversity and in addition to his own thought may suggest something that will benefit him in another way.

Whatever meanness there is in the spirit that communicates is also in the one who attracts that spirit, whether it be to the medium or to the communicant. Remember this.

It is only strong characters that can be influenced, and only upon solid foundations that we lean for support.

PERSONALS AND LOCALS.

Photos received:
Contributions accepted: W. P., L. A. S. N., E. A. W.

The Rev. M. J. Savage will remain in Boston, having declined the invitation to go to Chicago.

Long & Moon, Decorators, 217 Walnut street, use plastic in decorations. Plastic is properly anti-wall paper and antikalomine. It possesses advantages over paper and kalsomine—both for cheap, plain work and the most elaborate.

We regret to state that Dr. F. L. H. Willis has had an unwelcome attack of indigestion since our last issue, but are also happy to state that he has recovered and is himself again. We are prone to believe it was a case of acclimatization, and he will feel all the better for it in the future, even after he leaves us—Cincinnati having a healing magnetism, which heals a man by first making him sick. After that he can take chances which he never before dared.

"Mediumship" by Mrs. Lois Waisbrooker in our Ladies Department will prove interesting reading matter to many.

Dr. F. L. H. Willis and Hon. A. B. Richmond contribute each a splendid article for our first page in this week's issue which must not be overlooked.

We are glad to hear that Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond, of Chicago, Ill., has recovered from her late serious illness and is now convalescent.

Look
To your tag on the wrapper
and when your subscription to
THE BETTER WAY
Expires

Oblige us by renewing promptly.
Will C. Hodge has been furnishing our readers with interesting accounts of spiritual phenomena, for which many are thanking him. Not so much for the fact in itself, for many can do likewise, but for the neat, practical and clear manner in which he makes his statements,

leaving out all such puerile mentionings that are not understood by the materialistic world and at most only cause a credulous smile to move the skeptic. Besides that he is neat in chirography and is a welcome contributor to printers. We would like a few more such as he.

Dr. F. L. H. Willis, our speaker for this month, had an interested audience on Wednesday evening, the 4th instant, listening to his experiences as a medium and Spiritualist during his earlier career—between twenty and thirty years ago—and which developed some remarkable and almost marvelous narrations of tests, seances and spirit power. The doctor has passed through some trying ordeals and gave such vivid pictures of them that none could help but sympathize with him. However, he can console himself with the fact that they are now passed, and he is not the worse off (spiritually) for it; for as he stood relating them, his form was enveloped in a cloud of purest white and indicated the nearness to the angel world that he had reached through these trials.

The attention of our readers is called to the testimonial in favor of F. N. Foster, spirit-photographer, on 7th page of this issue, and to his advertisement on another page.

Ingersoll is also nominated for the Presidency through the columns of the New York Truthseeker.

Dr. F. L. H. Willis will be pleased to see his friends, either socially or professionally, at 468 Baymiller street.

The Union Society expresses its thanks to the ladies for their recent labors in behalf of the treasury.

In a beautiful inspirational poem on Sunday morning, Dr. Willis introduced the whole philosophy of life in the spiritualistic trinity of love, light, God. These poetic improvisations alone are worth the trouble of attending the services at G. A. R. Hall.

We desire to call the attention of our readers to the card of Dr. F. L. H. Willis, on the fifth page. We can conscientiously recommend the doctor and his services as being all that is claimed.

Send us no more stories, please, as we have a lot of short articles we must work off first—before they become stale. Facts are preferable to fiction.

Sunday morning the 8th, Dr. Willis made his second appearance on our platform to a large and fine audience.

The subject of his lecture was: "The Relation of Spiritual Laws to Every-day Life." Although Dr. Willis stepped upon the platform so enfeebled from a severe attack of illness he had had during the week that he felt as if he could with difficulty stand, yet he spoke for one hour with a power and vigor that was a matter of surprise to all who knew of his physical condition.

His lecture was simply a masterpiece of power, pathos, poetic beauty and exalted spiritual truths. It held his audience entranced, and almost breathless a full hour.

From the moment of its commencement to its close, the speaker was evidently under a powerful inspirational influence, and his occasional outbursts of poetic fervor were thrillingly beautiful. At the same time his clear, logical, scientific statements, his close reasoning, as he discussed the wonderful processes through which spiritual life is constantly being evolved out of the material life, carried conviction to the hearts of his hearers, and the lingering of the audience after its dismissal, and the comments passed from lip to lip proved how profound an impression the speaker had made upon his hearers.

"I never heard anything like it." "It was the finest revelation of spiritual laws to which I ever listened." "Well, we have a speaker this month worth listening to." "It was the purest, most exalted spiritual philosophy ever presented from our rostrum," were the comments heard in all parts of the hall.

A synopsis of this lecture can do it no justice. We are hoping it may be our privilege to publish the entire lecture.

In the evening Dr. spoke to a large and critical audience made up largely of our best thinkers on "The Causation of Things or the God Idea."

For profundity of thought, brilliancy of rhetoric, and keenness of argument, this lecture was a fitting counterpart of the morning's, but far exceeding it in power. The speaker first presented the sectarian's ideas of God; then he drew a vivid contrast between those and the ideas of Deity as presented in "The Age of Reason," by Thomas Paine, that grand man, so vilified and abused by sectarians, and closed by a powerful presentation of the conceptions of Deity given him through spiritual revelation, as the totality of all the attributes of spirit, the impersonal, all-brooding, all-unfolding, divine spirit of life, love, intelligence, wisdom, call it what we may. It is the spiritual energy, the informing life of the universe, and the consciousness of it has been too deep rooted in the human soul ever to be eradicated.

The unanimous and hearty expression of our people is, that we have a rich treat in store for us during the remainder of Dr. Willis' engagement.

Everything that exceeds the bounds of moderation has an unstable foundation.—Seneca.

NEWS ITEMS.

Gold in Buenos Ayres is at a premium of 25.

Ella Ewing of Scotland County, Mo., is 18 years old, 8 feet high and weighs 245 pounds.

107 trunks constituted part of Sarah Bernhard's wardrobe on her arrival in New York recently.

The Massachusetts Legislature has been petitioned to buy a sword of George Washington for \$20,000.

Jean Louis Ernest Meissonier, the painter, who had been ill for several days, died in Paris on the 31st ult.

OGDEN, UTAH. A west bound Union Pacific train of twenty-six coal-cars became unmanageable near Echo Junction, and ran nine miles down-grade at the rate of ninety miles an hour. Finally it flew the track, and the whole train piled up in the ditch. H. C. Redmour, fireman, J. S. Kummel, brakeman, and W. S. Norton, brakeman, were injured, the latter perhaps fatally.

The National Citizens' Alliance is pushing the interests of those who wish to occupy in the towns and cities the same position politically that the Farmers' Alliance does in the country. The same platform is advocated. How many in Cincinnati wish to join?—Golden Rule.—Let this party nominate Ingersoll as its presidential candidate and it will soon become a power in the land.

DENVER, COL. Allen Heath, a prosperous Norwegian farmer of Corona, a small town near Denver, was robbed of \$5,000. He went into a saloon, where he was induced to bet \$40 that his check was not good for \$5,000 at the German National Bank. He wrote the check, and that is all that he remembers until he awoke in the rear of the saloon. The check had been cashed by O'Connor, one of the proprietors of the place.

FT. WAYNE, IND., February 2. After entertaining a large number of friends at his last dinner to-day Abraham Gump entered upon his thirty-day fast for \$1,000, wagered by colonel James Geary, that he cannot do it and live. The Colonel has four watchmen, who are with him, and there is no chance that Gump will be able to get at any food. He is allowed cigars and water in any quantity. He weighed 126 when he entered on his fast at 1:04.

AMBOY, ILL., February 5.—Miss Grace Gridley has just awakened from a most remarkable and prolonged trance. As the result of religious excitement she went into a comatose condition nearly a year ago and continued in that state up to the present time, taking no food during all that time except a little in liquid form. She has now regained the use of her muscles and is in a fair way to recover. She says she was conscious all the while, but was unable to make the fact known to her friends. She repeats conversations which occurred in her hearing during her trance.

TIFFIN, OHIO, February 2.—Peculiar circumstances attended the death of Henry Sampson, a prominent business man of the village of Bloomfield, which took place on Saturday afternoon. In the morning he complained of not feeling well, and after eating sparingly of breakfast calmly notified his wife that it was destined that he should die before night. So firmly was he impressed with the idea that he arranged his business affairs and sent for a number of friends, whom he bade farewell, and then awaited the summons. It came at 1:10 o'clock, when he passed quietly away without a struggle or any indication of physical suffering. Mr. Sampson, although but 35 years of age, was one of the best known and popular business men in the county.

The People and Patriot of Concord, N. H., says: One of the greatest mistakes done in our last legislature was the passing of a bill, chapter 57, page 78, 1889, against informing a person of their lost or stolen property. Also, for lecturing on physiognomy. And now a bill is before the house to prevent persons from employing what physician they think best. Is this not monopoly in a free country? Is every new discovery to be crushed by a few? Is it not time that each school should have a board of examiners, whatever that school may be, so that each person may choose, practice or employ who or what they prefer? Vermont takes this stand, and repealed her doctor law. Maine and many other states have done the same. A good physician like a good mechanic can always obtain patronage. Persons do not always like to be forced to follow a creed or person they have no interest in. Consistency is a jewel sometimes, and we might as well go back to the old blue laws and sit content with the workings of the past as to sit shackled with the thumbscrews of such conditions.

How Is This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars reward for any case of catarrh that cannot be cured by taking Hall's Catarrh Cure.

F. J. CHENEY, & Co., Toledo, O.
We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last fifteen years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions and financially able to carry out any obligations made by their firm.

WEST & TRAX, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.
WALDING, KINMAN & MARVIN, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O.
Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Testimonials sent free. Sold by all druggists, 75c.

Correspondence.

Battle Creek, Mich.

Helen Stuart-Richings, the eloquent exponent of Spiritualism, had a crowded house at her course of lectures at the interest of her course of lectures appears to be greatly increasing. At the close of her address she recited "The Ride of Jennie McNeil," in a charming manner and elicited unbounded applause. Her closing lecture will be given this evening when she will answer questions on topics presented by the audience. - Journal.

Indianapolis, Ind.

I expect you think the society here has ceased to exist, but such is not the fact. There has been a revival going on since the two factions have united, especially this month. Mrs. Adah Sheehan is our speaker for this month. None know her but to love her. On Sunday last there was the largest audience and appreciative one that I have ever seen in our halls. If we could have a lecturer as Mrs. Sheehan with us it would not be long till we would have a temple of our own. How true is the saying, we hardly get acquainted with our speakers when they leave us for other fields. I hope the time is not far distant when societies will engage their speakers by the year. More anon. - JOURNAL.

St. Louis, Mo.

Bishop A. Beals, this most excellent worker in the spiritual cause has just closed an engagement with the Ethical Spiritual Society of that city.

His inspiring words have attracted the attention of the thoughtful mind and thinker, by his earnest and forcible reasoning, and in bringing the truths of spiritual knowledge to bear on the mind of his hearers.

Those eager for truth have been led from darkness to light. He is an attractive, refined, spiritual man, working for the good of the cause, and just the one to brush the ashes of desolation from the sorrowing heart.

Mr. Editor, with such men as Bishop A. Beals, and your most valuable paper that lighteth every man ought to redeem every one.

Respectfully, M. P. CURRAN.

Worcester, Mass.

Mrs. Nickerson, of New Bedford, Mass., spoke for us the last two Sabbaths and was appreciated by all. She is a very able and interesting speaker and test medium.

I am happy to announce that our faithful and willing workers, Dr. G. A. Fuller and wife, have located in our city, and will occupy our platform the Sundays of February, and I trust with good results.

Mrs. J. A. Fisher, one of our trance mediums of great promise and of grand business gifts, has lectured for the Spiritual Society at Bridgeport Conn., with marked success, as well as in other places.

Mrs. E. M. Shirley, a medium having general gifts, has frequent calls at Westborough, Mass., Troy and other places, to lecture with good results, as repeated calls from the same societies bear witness. - C. R. BENNETT.

Spring Hill, Kas.

For seven months myself and Judge Shively have been prosecuting a development in psychography, when first began to appear organic forms in tea and coffee sediment, in cups used by us, writing also; then on slates, then on all smooth surfaces, and at times in color, blue, green and white, yellow and red being represented.

This was so suggestive that I bought a camera. We still lack the art to represent our wish, but in every instance we have caught our negative spirit forms, and in one instance writing.

I am assured that writings are to become a popular photographic phase with us. I have been so absorbed with the development of this phase that I have not for two months written up any phenomena, but when on the high ground of its success, will resume again. - J. H. Pratt in Aleyone.

St. Louis, Mo.

The Daily Republic of last Monday says: "The Ethical and Spiritual Association of St. Louis held their regular Sunday evening service last evening in their hall at Grand avenue and Olive street. There was quite a large audience present, among whom were noticed many prominent business men and their families. Ex-Mayor Joseph Brown introduced the speaker of the evening and of the month, Mr. Frank T. Ripley, of Boston, who delivered a very learned address while under the influence of the spirits and performed some very wonderful things in the way of mind reading and psychometry, or soul reading."

Mr. Ripley is a man of medium height, of a sandy complexion and a rather nervous temperament. The subject of his lecture that night was "Who and where is God?" and the answer, God is a personality, God is everywhere and everything."

The Globe of the same date also gives a fair account of the services and closes as follows: "Mr. Ripley's logical reasoning seemed to impress the audience very favorably. He will lecture again next Sunday at the same hall."

Minneapolis, Minn.

The Spiritualists of Minneapolis and their friends filled the G. A. R. Hall in Masonic Temple to overflowing last evening. It was a fine memorial service, in honor of the thirtieth anniversary of the birth of the great apostle of liberty, Thomas Paine. On the platform were seated Mrs. C. D. Prudden, Miss A. A. Judson and Prof. J. H. Randall, a member of the Liberal League, of Chicago. The program consisted of addresses, vocal and instrumental selections and readings.

Mrs. Prudden presided, and, after the opening song, "America," she introduced Professor Randall, who made a few remarks concerning the charges that the clergy had made against Paine, and then proceeded to show the utter falsity of some of the matters, especially the charge made by a New England parson that his bones were finally sold to a button maker and made into buttons.

Mrs. Judson read one of Mrs. R. S. Little's poems, entitled "One Hundred Years to Come." Mrs. Little formerly lived in Minneapolis, and the reading was most interesting on that account. In the poem she states that she intends to "visit us one hundred years to come." - Tribune.

Brooklyn, N. Y.

All the meetings of Brooklyn Spiritualists have been well attended of late, and there is quite a revival of interest, owing to the prominence that has been given to such matters, by the general disavowal all over the world of hypnotism and the many striking phenomena that have come to public notice. The conferences at Everett Hall and other places are generally thronged by large listeners. The meetings at Mrs. Dr. Blake's parlors on Sunday nights are increasingly interesting. Twice lately the well-known artist, Mrs. Newburn, has assisted with her charming songs. Mrs. Blake's tests are very striking, and marvelously corroborated by facts and the testimony of the recipients. Last Saturday night she gave clear tests on practical matters at Everett Hall, every one of which was admitted to be

correct. The healing of the sick and diagnosis of disease all attracting very wide notice. Various attempts are being made to draw attention of Spiritualists to aid issues, but with out apparent success. - R. L. K.

Newark, N. J.

A few days ago in Charleston, S. C., my business threw me in the way of one of the most interesting old gentlemen I have ever met, and I shall never forget the pleasant two hours I passed in his office. I was much surprised at learning he was none other than the father of my spiritualistic Brother McKers of this better way. The old gentleman is a singularly well preserved person for his age, and is deeply interested in the subject of Spiritualism, in which he has been a student for many years.

I delivered a lecture Dec. 28th last, before the First Society of Louisville, Ky., and judging from the many flattering letters I have received since from the good people composing my audience at that time, I am forced to believe my work was appreciated by them, and so many urgent requests have been made that I would favor them with the whole or part of my lecture through your worthy paper, and I shall submit some copy to you as soon as I can get time from my exceedingly busy, daily life. I hope this letter finds you well and happy.

Yours, JOHN EUGLESTON.

[Since writing the above our good friend has turned up in New York, having arrived there via Philadelphia. Mr. Eugleston does much in a private way, concerning the cause, and though not a professional lecturer, we are informed, can turn the pages with many of them the travels for Morrill & Co's ink manufactory, and thus finds himself a worker in spirit and matter at the same interval. - E.S.]

Anderson, Ind.

Mrs. Seery, late of Cincinnati, but now residing in Dayton, was in Anderson, a central thriving city of the Indiana gas field, presiding at a trumpet service last week. To say that Mrs. Seery's services are startling and impressive is putting it mildly. They have to my knowledge convinced and rendered us extremely happy women and men who were cultured and reasoning skeptics having lost all confidence in vicarious statement and other dogmas in the Christian Church have lapsed into gloomy pessimism. The Roman Church, reared on the ruins of wrecked and effete paganism, grasped reason by the throat, and during the dark ages strangled to suffocation the conscious reasoning powers of spiritual intellect, and free thought freed the world. What a change in the last years from gloomy despond to cheering hope has science testimony produced. The testimony produced by Mrs. Seery's meetings, where the idea of fraud is eliminated by test conditions, convinces and renders happy those who investigate.

I recall an instance that occurred at one of Mrs. Seery's sances: It was that of one of the members of the Methodist Church, who, after the meeting closed, expressed to the circle that he had been in many class meetings where he had felt and believed his spiritual strength was renewed, but never before had he experienced such exquisite happiness as when his dear old mother, who had been in the spirit world many years, by test convinced him that they were holding converse about things of the past.

Yours for the cause, CHAS. N. BRANCH.

Evansville, Ind.

This city is not behind the march of progress and making gradual strides out of the darkness of error and superstition in regard to religious teachings.

We have had the great pleasure of having with us for the past five weeks Mr. Hugh R. Moore, the Dayton Ohio "Boy Medium," so called owing to his youth, who is doing much through his excellent mediumship and gentlemanly manners to advance the cause of Spiritualism. He is making new converts right along and clinching the knowledge already obtained by previously confirmed Spiritualists. Mr. Moore's controlling spirit, "Uncle Joe" Holliday is by long odds superior to any one we ever had the pleasure of hearing. We cannot fully express our hearty thanks and appreciation of spirit Holliday to the grand cause of Spiritualism. With the very intelligent talks obtained with him, and his clear, distinct and forcible words, many have had their doubts removed as to the truth of spirit return and inter-communion between the world of spirits and the world of mortals.

Mr. Moore's etherialization and trumpet in the light manifestations are highly enjoyed and satisfactory on the principle that "seeing is believing," as also the regular dark-circle trumpet sances.

We had a lecture by spirit Joe Holliday last Sunday, the 1st inst., lasting two and one-half hours without interruption, spoken through the trumpet in dark sance, which was very highly enjoyed and appreciated by all of the large circle who were so fortunate as to be present on that occasion.

We think that we are very fortunate in being favored as we have been recently, and desire to spread the good news through your columns.

Yours, fraternally, JOHN W. KRAZ.

Springfield, Mo.

The Progressive Spiritual Society of this city, which was born into existence October 25, 1890, has got to be a child of large growth, and if no spiritual drought comes to impede it we hope for it, at the end of one year, to compare favorably to societies of much longer existence.

Our hall being situated in the northern part of the city we had but one lecture a week. The interest that was being manifested compelled us to procure another in the southern part, on St. Louis street. Our society holding the first service at 3 o'clock p. m., January 4th, Prof. J. M. Allen, who filled our rostrum the last five Sundays of the old year, did us a noble service, converting many skeptics to our beautiful philosophy.

The following resolution was adopted at the close of his last lecture.

We, as a spiritual society, owe more than a passing notice to Prof. J. Madison Allen for his efficient work here as a spiritual lecturer and psychometric reader.

Resolved, That we return our thanks to him for the glorious light the angel world has shown through him in his lectures, texts and heaven-inspired music given to us during his short stay with us. And while he is thus ministering to mortals with no such acceptance and profit to them, may the blessed angels administer to him in return. Be it further

Resolved, That we recommend him to other societies in need of first-class ability. That these resolutions be recorded in the minutes of the society; that a copy of the same be sent to THE BETTER WAY for publication.

We have secured the noted child medium and lecturer, Miss Corn Myrtle Carpenter, of Hannibal, Mo., for January and February. She is giving excellent satisfaction thus far, and drawing good audiences. The subjects, which are given by the audience, have been handled by her controls equal to those of our old, experienced trance speakers. We will have more to say of her at some future time.

Wishing the best success to follow the efforts put forth by THE BETTER WAY in disseminating the truths of Modern Spiritualism, I remain as ever, yours in progression, W. J. BLACK.

Willimantic, Conn.

The present writing finds me in the pretty manufacturing town of Willimantic, filling a month's engagement with the Spiritualist Society. They own a pleasant church, and have a well-attended association. The lecture is in good condition, and the lectures are fully attended, considering the population. Like all societies, with which I am acquainted, they have their experience of prosperity and adversity. There is, however, a steady increase in the respect with which they are treated by the community as evidenced by the fact that a fair, which they have recently held, netted them five, and was patronized by different sects.

The speakers who have preceded me this season, have been Nellie J. T. Brigham, Sidus Dean and W. F. Beck, all of whom have given general satisfaction. At the completion of my engagement I shall return to my regular work at the First Spiritual Temple, Boston, the platform being occupied meantime by the veteran speaker, Dr. H. H. Storer, whose eloquent and instructive lectures have no longer been familiar to the spiritualistic public.

I am glad to report that our Temple Society is in a harmonious and prosperous condition, considering the many obstacles with which we have had to contend. This is the fifth year of my service to this society, during which time the experiences have been exceedingly varied. We now feel, however, that certain signal points to more satisfactory work than any hitherto performed, as a portion of the community seem to understand us better, and to exhibit a more fraternal spirit.

The generous donor of the building, Mr. M. S. Ayer, maintains the same unvarying interest and standard devotion to the work he has undertaken. A few friends are slowly coming forward to aid and co-operate, and we trust that in the not distant future, such financial support will be forthcoming, as will measurably perfect the plans of mortals and spirits. These purposes, I think, are in accord with the largest mental liberty and true spiritual progress.

It may interest your readers to know that the building contains a fine dining room and kitchen, in which hygienic suppers, which have been generously praised, have been given from time to time. The last, which occurred Saturday, was attended by a delighted company, who partook both mental and physical repast with excellent satisfaction. The supper is always followed by a discussion on "Food Reform," many of our people having been led to adopt vegetarianism, to which the writer has given adherence for more than twelve years.

I am glad to report that the other spiritual societies of Boston are evidently meeting with excellent success, as the several halls in which they convene are amply filled, and much good work seems being performed.

I read with pleasure the progress of matters spiritual in your city, and with best wishes for THE BETTER WAY.

I am fraternally thine, MRS. H. S. LARK.

New York.

The Spiritualists of this city seem to be stirred into unusual activity by some unknown influence, and as a consequence two new societies have been inaugurated within this month, and if indications count for anything there is sufficient interest manifested to ensure them a future of usefulness and good.

The latest of those organizations which propose to minister to the spiritual welfare of persons who seek the light of truth and to spread abroad the philosophy of Spiritualism, has for its president Mrs. M. E. Williams. Her energy and spirit, which are ever developing, conceived the idea of a need for this school of thought, and in collaboration with Mr. J. W. Fletcher they have launched this new skill on the ocean of life with the colors of Spiritualism flying from the masthead.

I am not aware that this organization has yet received a distinguishing appellation but its objects are good. It is proposed to have a platform of free speech, to foster the cause of Spiritualism.

On Friday evening, the 6th inst., the society made its bow to the world of Spiritualism, and congratulations were freely showered on the enterprising president and her eloquent collaborator. For an initial meeting the hall was well filled, and every form of thought flowing from the fountain-head of Spiritualism was represented.

This pleasant condition of things was interrupted by the appearance of the president on the platform, when a volume of sound issued from the audience that attested the harmonious blending of the elements and the universal esteem in which she is regarded by all sections. Her handsome features were wreathed in smiles of recognition and thanks. Then she stated the objects of the new association, and extended a welcome to all. She closed by reading a circular which she received from the Psychical Investigation Society, with headquarters at 63 Lyman street, Providence, R. I., and which bore the signatures of the Rev. M. J. Savage, of Boston, and Dr. Heber Newton, of this city. They asked her co-operation in helping to clear up the mysteries of psychism. She was delighted to see those men, at last, make this concession to the cause of truth.

Mr. Fletcher, who was moved by the pervading spirit of good feeling, made a neat address, suitable to the occasion. He referred to the clerical circular, and said that Mr. Minto Savage "knows too much to be an exact Christian, and does not know enough to be a liberal." Then he asked, "Why, in the name of heaven and everything else, do not the scientific men and profound theologians give a single particle of evidence for the faith that was in them?"

At the next meeting Mr. Fletcher will answer questions submitted by the audience. The parent organization, the First Society is doing good work at Adelphi Hall every Sunday. Under the benign pastorate of Hudson Tuttle the philosophy is dispensed with good results, to the gratification of all.

The Medium's Conference had a large attendance on Sunday. Mrs. Williams still remains president, and Mr. Fletcher puts in an occasional appearance; if too late to speak, to smile on the assembled.

Springfield, Mass.

Many drawbacks, and a great one the excruciating Sunday weather all the season had decidedly discouraged the Spiritualists of Springfield; for notwithstanding fine talent had been placed on the platform, yet small audiences generally had been the rule.

With Sunday, February 1st, came a change; for dubious as the outlook was, especially with the rain descending the night before, the day dawned bright and proved a pleasant one.

The platform was occupied by Mr. J. Frank Baxter, probably better known in this vicinity than any spiritual speaker, and decidedly popular with the thinking classes of all schools and the younger of the community. That there are others who excel him as an organizer and vocalist may be a fact, but there are eloquentists ahead of him may not be doubted; that there are platform mediums his equal on the whole is so, yet he stands unrivaled as a possessor of all these rare accomplishments in one person. He is eminently successful wherever he goes, drawing large audiences and giving general satisfaction, and probably all is owing to this great variety of gifts. It certainly is this versatility that draws to him so many young ladies and gentlemen.

Here in Springfield, on the Sunday named he called out very large audiences, numbering hundreds and demanding extra seating capacity far beyond even the usual preparation which had been made. The dropping spirit of the management revived as the people continuously came, paid their fees, were ushered to seats, and swelled the assemblies to large proportions.

Mr. Baxter sang well and electrically his several selections, and read poems of sterling merit, and gave lectures greatly appreciated for their need, their worth and their great effectiveness.

In the afternoon some descriptions of spirits were given, but in the evening he closed his day's exercises, as usual, with a platform review of one hour's duration, from 8 to 9 o'clock. The audience was on the verge of ecstasy, knowing Mr. Baxter's merits as a delineating medium so well, and it is to be reported that after canvassing the attendants thoroughly and getting free expression, the most general satisfaction was given and certainly to the mind of the majority he went beyond reasonable anticipation.

The hall will be crowded without doubt at early hours on next Sunday, when Mr. Baxter is announced to appear again, the programs named being replete with matters of interest and attraction.

While these meetings are under the auspices of the First Spiritual Society of Springfield, yet really the backbone of the movement, and in fact the willing and generous financial backer is Mr. C. L. Leonard, a wealthy and old-time Spiritualist. He says: "My discouragement this season has not been because of the hundreds of dollars I've had to pay from my pocket, but that so much of the worthy talent and work I have paid for was lost, save a few. What I want is the people to hear, and therein is my only satisfaction. The money is ready and provided, now let me have the people ready and appreciative." What a generous spirit is that! How strange that Spiritualists do not give him full encouragement. What do we mean? Think: When the stormy days come, especially a stormy season, it is not to be expected that non-Spiritualists, chateaus, or the masses generally will come out, but they are just the times of all times that every Spiritualist and Liberal who can should leave the comfortable home and have the storm and go out to the meetings and make an audience for the encouragement of such men as Mr. Leonard and the speaker, who surely would be severely criticized and treated were he not at his post. If Spiritualists intend to spend part of their time at home, as is their right, still let it be considered that the pleasant Sundays are the best to choose; for on those days halls are fairly attended from the general people, even though not Spiritualists, yet inquirers or interested ones; but to make effort on the stormy Sundays to be present, lest otherwise audiences shall be sparse, and able and well-doing men retire in discontent.

In Springfield there is a flourishing Ladies' Aid Society meeting every Wednesday afternoon and evening, the ladies' work being done in the evening, a supper served from 5:30 to 7:30 p. m., and a social entertainment, often of a literary, musical or instructive nature in the evening, to which the public is cordially invited. From certain resources at the command of this society, and a ten cents door fee to the Sunday lectures, the management of the First Society endeavors to do what it can that Mr. Leonard's exchequer need not be, at least, the sole source of draft. Mr. Leonard appreciates fully, yet smiles, as he says: "Work to fill the hall, that's what we want. Labor to build up the society and the cause, and I'll be satisfied. The money don't worry me, as I see so many apathetic Spiritualists—and don't you worry on that score."

Now, what lesson there is in all this? How many just such men there have been, all over the country, willing to do, trying to do, and many lethargic and indifferent Spiritualists willing that they should, and offering little or no encouragement, till finally weary of well doing in that direction withdraw from fellow ship, shut down their exchequer and give their money in other directions. And then struggling societies of to day and many new Spiritualists wonder why wealthy Spiritualists in numbers are not with them, and their monies given to the building up of Spiritualism in their respective cities and towns. Alas! alas! Reflect!

In Springfield, too, is another worker, but in another direction particularly. He is identified closely with the lecture movement in the city of Springfield, yet his special work is in promulgating Spiritualism through the publication of the paper, Aleyone. Of course is meant Mr. H. A. Buddington, an indefatigable worker, a friend of all true mediums and while denunciatory of all fraud, yet discriminating and charitable toward all misled mortals or misguided by lower spirits, and ever ready to raise any who are anywise repentant and ready to do what they can toward raising themselves. Aleyone is well known and is an ably conducted sheet, and is surprising to see how much matter, including spiritual news and the pith of valuable lectures and much concise correspondence the little ten-page sheet contains. Of course it does not enlarge on THE BETTER WAY, Banner of Light, Religious Philosophical Journal and other great sheets, but it does it competently really with them, but one gets the meat of the spiritual movement in a nut of great value.

This, intended report, has taken the form of a communication, yet feeling it is timely it is submitted. - SCRIBER.

Testimonial.

Office of Dye & Sherman, Attorneys at Law, 151 Eleventh Street, N. W., Washington, D. C., Sept. 15, 1890.

B. F. Poole, Clinton, Iowa:—From the moment I put your glasses on my face they have given me entire satisfaction. Kindly and truly, B. F. POOLE.

Los Angeles, Cal.

The cause is progressing all along the line, especially in the National City and Los Angeles. The spiritual organizations are doing good work. They are harmoniously banded together, holding Sunday meetings.

DR. F. L. H. WILLIS MAY BE ADDRESSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE

46 Avenue B, Vick Park, ROCHESTER, N. Y.

DR. F. L. H. WILLIS may be addressed at the above. From this point he has attended to the delineating of disease psychometrically. He claims that his powers in this line are unrivaled, combining, as he does, accurate scientific knowledge with keen and penetrating psychometric power.

Dr. Willis claims special skill in treating all diseases of the blood and ureters, such as Cancer, Scrophulous in all its forms, Eczema, Psoriasis, and all the most delicate and complicated diseases of both sexes.

Dr. Willis is permitted to refer to numerous cases, which have been cured by his system of practice. When all others have failed, ALL cases must contain a return postage stamp. Send for full particulars and testimonials. Terms.

Have you read the UOOTHINUS of Emanuel Swedenborg?

In regard to Man as a Spiritual Being and Life after Death? If not, send to Adolph Roeder, Vineland, N. J., for Catalogues. Swedenborg's works and New Church literature in English, German and French in stock.

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TIMELY TOPICS.

L. HICKSON.

The age is justly reeling further and further from that false standard that measures man by creedal convictions or theological faith. We rejoice at the true progress of our broadening era of enlightenment which recognizes that the sublimest characteristics, those basic principles of humanity, are not the outgrowth of this belief or that particular faith. The narrow question, "Do you subscribe to the demands of the 39 Articles, the Westminster Catechism, the Bible?" etc., has been widened and deepened into an analysis of man's "conduct of life." The soiled and worn yard-stick, with its presumptuous fractional divisions, marking the intimacy with the plans of Creator and creation, determining the utility or futility, the sympathy or apathy of man and manners, is being laid aside. Spiritualism has been a potent factor in this revolution of evolution. All protests against the restriction of any of man's faculties and capacities, no matter under what form or name they are known, are climbing the rugged steps to the establishment of the freedom of man—intellectually, morally, socially, politically and religiously. No life better illustrates this in its efforts, than the earthly one terminated by Charles Bradlaugh, in London, England, on January 30th. His life from its very start to its close, has been a hard, a bitter and persistent struggle against the encroachment of tyranny upon toleration, of justice against injustice; he stood bravely and determinedly for the weak and the oppressed. His sympathy was as strong and untiring as his efforts and energy inexhaustible. During the excitement of the exposure of the terrible state of the manufacturing and farming class of England, 1847-48, through the London Times, the publication of that terribly realistic story of Alton Locke, by Kingsley, Felix Holt, by George Eliot, and others, Charles Bradlaugh, at the age of fifteen appeared on the streets of London as an orator, advocating the right of political and sanitary reform. When *Under Garibaldi's* lead, was struggling against the power of Europe and the oppressions of centuries, he raised and sent 100 guineas to help the cause of freedom. His activities in behalf of republicanism, in France, were awarded by being thrown in prison twice. His greatest accomplishments were the establishment of free speech and press in England. Up to 1869 every English paper was under necessity of giving a security of \$4,000 to guard against the appearance of seditious and blasphemous libel. He printed his *Freethinker*, and so baffled the efforts of the crown that the statute was repealed. He was also instrumental in establishing the competency of freethinkers to give evidence in courts of law.

A few hours previous to his demise the House of Commons expunged from its record the resolution of June, 1880. Mr. Gladstone spoke heartily for the same, while such bitter opposition as that of the Tories, under the lead of Sir W. B. Bartlett and Sir Stafford Northcote, asked the unanimity of the House in this measure. Mr. Bradlaugh was elected to a seat from Northampton, as companion to Henry Labouchere, editor of *Truth*, but was refused admission owing to his atheistic views. He refused to take oath, and was locked in the Tower. Released on the following day, the House adopted a resolution permitting members to affirm, but denying the right to vote. This brought on various suits in which he was the victor. It was this resolution that the House expunged after a disgraceful standing of eleven years, although Mr. Bradlaugh never realized it, as he was unconscious up to his death. During his life he associated with Mrs. Besant in the publication of many pamphlets and books. Mrs. Besant has since become a Theosophist. Mr. Bradlaugh had sufficient ability to justify his admittance into any cabinet, but his past record made him unacceptable. In personal behavior he was so courteous and his moderation so unexpected after the turbulent scenes through which he passed, that even his enemies were his friends. We honor the man for what he did, for what he was.

The dangers arising from an unrestricted emigration are not likely to receive the careful and considerate attention from Congress that a problem of so serious a nature, affecting us as a nation, so vitally, should receive. If some measure should be passed it will likely be in the form of placing restrictions upon those whose money possessions are not up to a certain standard. That the United States is not and must not serve as a "dumping-place" for the old world insane, decrepit and pauperized element, is admitted upon the principles of self-defense and consequent self-preservation; and the rigid punishment of any government guilty of forcing its burdensome element upon neighboring nations; as the very causes that have been conducive to the establishment and maintenance of the government, have also, to some extent, been instrumental in the production of that element which is desirous of ridding itself of it. But is the imperative need of the hour money men? Does the salvation of the future of our country depend more upon money than men

and morals? Are plan and purpose, brain and muscle, pluck and perseverance wholly useless unless accompanied with current coin? Does money at all times outweigh the worth of sturdy, honorable and determined manhood? We could point to several men, foreigners by birth, whose brain productions and moral purposes have done service in important crises of the country's history that are incapable of being measured by money. We have an undoubted, legitimate right to protect ourselves, but we should take care that in such protection should not lie the very imperilment which we wish to avoid. Our duty lies in meeting these evils; not in avoiding them. They demand solution; and historical evidence can corroborate the statement that no vital question is best subserved by being postponed. Can there not, then, be a possible way to obviate some of the threatening aspects of these evils without resorting to exclusion? Edward Everett Hale offers some suggestions in the February *Cosmopolitan*, and, if applied, may contain the germ which will enable us to meet this evil. In these quotations, Mr. Hale speaks of bad municipal government and its causes, but it applies equally well nationally:

"In the great 'social problem' I should say that the business of far-sighted and public-spirited men was to make sure that each one of these settlers attracted by the unquestioned advantages of city life should be roused to self-respect, to a personal consciousness of his duty as a member of the state, and so trained that he should wish to take part in its responsibilities. We must be upon the lookout to show to every person who arrives here that, from the moment he arrives, he is to do his own thinking and to consider himself responsible for the results of his life and of his vote. It is not very difficult to impress this as a point of honor. What right has a man to receive from the past such incalculable gifts as the past gives to every beggar of us all, and to do nothing to carry forward such gifts to the future which is to come, that one's children and one's children's children may have the good of them."

We are glad to note that Mr. Hale's suggestions are being carried out in several cities. In our own Cincinnati, public night instruction is had in all departments of knowledge calculated to infuse a loftier purpose, and a more intimate acquaintance with our history, at a hall that was formerly the meeting place for discontented foreigners, who are now learning to forget what they were by being taught what they can be. While it is true this may be only a partial remedy, it is at least an effort to look the matter squarely in the face—far better than turning our backs upon it, and permitting the same to grow to that extent where we shall be wholly incapable of dealing with the same.

Is there any better evidence of the barrenness of the claims made that formulated revealed religion is able to satisfy the soul-cravings of man's nature, than the present unrest and disquiet going on in creed and church circles? Is this demand for alteration, revision and casting off of old beliefs not corroborative of the impossibility of revealed religion presenting and representing the ultimate possibilities and attainments of the soul? Is it not a positive negation of the statement that God, foreknowing man's latest hour, would give laws governing him, his circumstances, with its progress and improvements, to men thousands of years remote, surrounded by conditions that plainly and strongly attest an inferiority of mental as well as moral qualities? Lastly, is it not a positive stultification to claim that it does, when it does not?

Professor Briggs, on his installation as Professor of Biblical Theology of Union Theological Seminary, in New York City, last week advocated the use of *reason* in the interpretation of the Bible. He said:

"Another means used by God to make himself known is the form of reason, the metaphysical categories, the conscious and the religious feeling. There are those who would refuse Rationalists a place in the company of the faithful. I cannot do so. But they forget that the essential thing is to find God; and if these men have found God without the mediation of the church and the Bible, Church and Bible are means not ends; they are avenues to God, not God. We regret that these Rationalists have depreciated the means of grace, so necessary to us, but we are warned lest we commit the same error and depreciate Reason and the Christian Consciousness. We are accustomed to attach superstition to Roman Catholic Mariology, Hagiology and the use of images, pictures and other external things in worship. But superstition is no less superstition if it take the form of Bibliolatry. But the greatest sin against the Bible has been the neglect of the ethics of Jesus. Tolstoi says the Christians think that Jesus did not mean what he said. Tolstoi's criticism is severe; but is it not just? If we really believe that Jesus meant what he said how could we live such selfish lives? It is my opinion that if the grace of God should so impel a man that he could be transformed into the image of the holy Jesus, the cry would resound through the streets of New York: 'Crucify him! Crucify him!'"

Strangest part of the entire proceeding is that the man manifesting the deepest hostility to Professor Briggs is Professor Park, of Andover Seminary, who was condemned some forty years ago, as being a dangerous heretic with infidel views, as he was sternly told, he was "in direct conflict with the catechism. His theory of Christianity was a complete denial of native depravity, that he mollified the doctrine of original sin, and that his notion of the atonement was evasive, extremely vague and unsatisfactory."

Thus we see the church by having adjusted itself to the radical views of that day, has become conservative to the advanced demands of Professor Briggs. The Professor has been vigorously assailed, and much stress will be brought to bear against his retaining the present position. The New York *Independent* has the following to say editorially, which, while it will represent the bearing of the conservative element, also implies the demand that the growing soul of to-day be cramped into the narrow jackets of an effete code and creed:

"Dr. Briggs is reported as saying that 'the Bible is no better than a mass-book for stopping a bullet, and is not as good as holy water for putting out a fire.' This is flippant and pithy, with a streak of wit in it yet to drag the Bible into the business of cracking jokes is sort of rhetoric for which we have no relish, and with which we do not know how to be amused. We do not think the address fitted to the theme or the occasion, or adapted to do a good service in the interests of Biblical Theology, and have felt constrained to put on record our objections thereto. That sort of 'Higher Criticism' which accepts, as true, what it finds in the Bible, not because it finds it there, but because it is true, and hence rejects what in its judgment is not true, even if there found, logically undermines the very foundation of a supernatural revelation from God, such as the Bible purports to be, and as we believe it to be. We believe the Bible to be the 'Word of God' in the sense of a supernatural inspiration, and hence believe that when the meaning of its language is ascertained, the absolute law of faith is supplied touching all matters embraced therein. If this be 'Bibliolatry,' then so be it. It is just the kind of 'Bibliolatry' which Christ and his Apostles clearly had in respect to the Old Testament Scriptures."

If Dr. Johnson were living to-day, liberal-spirited instead of dogmatically obstinate and prejudiced, his rugged nature would probably define revealed religion, as circumscription, restriction, confinement, fossilization; synonymous of stagnation; preventive of growth. How much mental vigor and intellectual power has been repressed and checked, which if it had not been for this conservatizing and chilling atmosphere of revealed religion—creed—and its devotees, would have been a potent factor in the advancement of mind, morals and men. The maintenance of the same in the past rested upon—I will not say, let history alone speak the awful story; my mind shudders at its contemplation; but let it also point the strong moral.

"WHAT IS SPIRITUALISM?"

To the Editor of The Better Way.

While I am quite certain that what I may write for your paper will only be so much for the waste basket, yet I feel quite sure some one will read it, so being in the spirit will send you a few thoughts. I do not write this complaining of want of proper consideration, being well aware that my general thought does not run in the popular channel and you are obliged to respect that to some extent at least.

In THE BETTER WAY of January 10th among your editorial thought is the following: "What is Spiritualism? is a question that will be presented for consideration in the near future; for much that is preached and printed and passed for Spiritualism just now is anything else, and ere long Spiritualists, so-called, will want to know who and what they are."

I am inclined to think and seriously hope that the time is not far distant when there will be an earnest and healthful inquiry arising in the minds of Spiritualists generally upon this subject. We may safely rest upon the well demonstrated problem that our modern phase declares that through its phenomena is established the truth of man's continued existence. So much is settled. But it is settled by human beings and while this being true also settles another truth, that all the messages we receive are from human beings who are constituted with various powers of intelligence and different degrees of mental unfoldment. Ideas, opinions, theories, philosophies and statements coming from humanity in the spirit realm in their wholeness, show the same general conditions of mentality that is found in the humanity that remain in material life. On the various subjects this new revelation brings to us here, there is a vast variety of opinions and positive conflict, and this on the close observer produces but one impression, and that is, these folks do not know what they are talking about, or at least there is not sufficient intellectual comprehension to a true statement for remember truth is "conformity to reality," and in that sense can never be relative. Where one gives an opinion or theory or even philosophy, let it be taken only as something that on its wholeness does not represent truth, but individual conception, and this will be a great step in advance. Well, now, all we have as the philosophy of Spiritualism and all that is represented as the teaching of Spiritualism is this confusing and conglomerate mass of opinions, theories and philosophies that come in messages from the spirit realm together with those very brilliant imaginations in this sphere, who taking the basic idea are capable of weaving into splendid mental goods which are so beautiful that they sell readily in the spiritual market where the plain, solid fact thought is entirely cast aside.

It is a question whether the mass of mind either in or out of the spiritual ranks are ready or desiring truth and nothing but truth.

That which is highly colored and even exaggerated, if richly adorned (truth is not so much necessary) will take every time with the masses. Still there is this good in all the thought about spiritual things, it turns the attention in the direction of the basic idea, the demonstrated fact of the inter-communication of the two realms of spirit life.

Those who send us messages, even the most developed, are of the theoretical cast of mind, and some get theories and beliefs where it is to be hoped that in that overhauling and weeding out time you referred to, we may hear from the scientific class of spirits. It is to be presumed that we will when the demand is made for them, but so long as the general mind swings in and towards the religion element, as it is plainly to be seen doing, we need expect only what we have—confusion. In the demonstrated fact of the continued existence of humanity, we have also the universally acknowledged fact that the religions of the present and past are myths, that is, a formula of ideas, as their foundations have no more existence in the realm of truth, than the myths of the Greeks concerning their gods or those of the Brahmin religion as well as those of Northern mythology—all of one class with some more intelligently expressed than others, perhaps. These, like all philosophies, opinions and theories, are composed of actual things, but not arranged to square with positive actualities and are falsehoods. Remember, "Truth is conformity to reality."

The religious powers both on the spirit side as well as this, appear to be awakening up to the fact that this modern spiritual force is becoming so strong that it will be well for them to attempt to adjust themselves to it, and it is in this endeavor that there is the possibility that the endeavor will result in still "binding back" the whole movement, confining its powers within the embrace of those whose whole aim is to keep the masses ignorant, because in that condition they are easily controlled. It is not an impossibility that much of the confusion in spiritual ideas is the direct result of the Jesuitical element on the spirit side, on purpose to raise doubt as to our power here to get at fact, thus inducing the old order of being ruled by the priesthood. From this it seems that the only safety in the present state of affairs is to send a strong mental force to the scientific spirits asking their aid in giving us truth and leading us out of our present confusion.

LITERARY.

Wilbraham's Wealth, or The Coming Democracy, by J. J. Morse, Liverpool, Eng. The Progressive Literary Agency, 80 Needham Road. Price, one shilling. This is a neat little story of 133 pages, and shows how a wealthy man disposed of his worldly goods to the advantage of his fellow mortals, setting an example that might be profitably (spiritually considered) imitated by his wealthy constituents all the world over. It closes with the building of "Wilbraham City" and some happy consequences. It is a pretty dream that may some day become a grand fact. However, the thought that is needed to accomplish it, is furnished by Mr. Morse, and everyone knows that whatever comes from the pen of this brilliant author and speaker is worth reading. Mr. Morse is a very earnest man; honest in the principles he advocates, and disposed to be charitable—the sentiment mostly needed in harmonizing the human family, and his spiritual work partakes of his character.

Testimonial to Walt Whitman by Robt. G. Ingersoll. An address delivered in Philadelphia October 21, 1890, with portrait of Whitman. Price, 25 cents. Truth Seeker Co., 28 Lafayette Place, New York.

Socialism of Christ, by Austin Bierbower, 12mo cloth, \$1.00. This book presents the attitude of early Christianity toward socialism and its related problems. All ancient writings bearing on the subject have been critically examined, as well as all ancient socialistic theories and attempts at practical communism: The author believes Christianity to be the outcome of a tremendous popular movement. Moderns will be astonished at how thoroughly and passionately those questions were anciently discussed which seem new to this age, and how they received a solution by Jesus or his immediate followers. The book is unlike any ever written, and will awaken intense interest in early Christianity as well as in social and economic problems. It is written in popular style, and abounds in constant surprises. Charles H. Sergel & Co., Publishers, 348 and 350 Dearborn street, Chicago, Ill.

Therapeutic Sarcognomy, a new science of soul, brain and body; a forthcoming work from the house of the J. G. Cupples Co., Boston, is a book of as highly sensational and attractive a character as is to be found in the realms of science. It makes a total revolution in physiology and medical philosophy, by presenting in one systematic view the functions of the brain, the body and the soul, with their exact anatomical connection and complex relations. Upon this view it develops a new system of practice in disease, and of hygienic laws for all, with a new electrotherapeutics and method of diagnosis. The ideas and experiments are singularly novel, but are strongly endorsed by colleges and investigating committees. The author, Prof. J. R. Buchanan, is well known as a forcible and brilliant writer upon scientific and reformatory subjects, who has long been prominent in the medical profession, and whose scientific views and discoveries have attracted attention in Europe.

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